

# Economies of Expansion: Chinese Peacekeeping Contributions Bolster “China’s Peaceful Development”

By  
Morgan Alderman

Senior Honors Thesis  
Curriculum in Peace War and Defense  
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

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Approved:



Dr. Jennifer Hazen, Thesis Advisor



Dr. Sara Castro, Reader

## **Abstract**

Over the past thirty years China has shifted its approach to United Nations (UN) peacekeeping operations from determined opposition to leading supporter. During this time period, China has also become a dominant force globally. With the second largest economy and expansive global infrastructure projects, China is positioning itself as the next great power. Under China's "peaceful development" strategy, its global engagement with UN peacekeeping and international development are key components of China's rising power. As a part of this, China's continued economic success is not only a central aspect of Chinese grand strategy, but also plays an integral role in its peacekeeping contribution decision-making. Particularly concerned with the preservation of Chinese resource and raw material investments across Africa, China has elected to send more troops to support its growing economic interests in the region. I thus argue that China's peacekeeping contributions are strategically motivated by Chinese economic interests abroad, and that China's peacekeeping contributions are sent to support Chinese economic interests abroad in the broader context of China's "peaceful development".

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## **Table of Contents**

INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER I. WHY DOES CHINA CONTRIBUTE TO UN PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS?	6
CHAPTER II. ECONOMICS AND CHINESE GRAND STRATEGY	21
CHAPTER III. ECONOMIC INTERESTS IN AFRICA	32
CHAPTER IV. TARGETED PEACEKEEPING CONTRIBUTIONS	40
CHAPTER V. RESOURCES, MARKETS, AND PEACEKEEPING	56
CONCLUSION	73
BIBLIOGRAPHY	78

## **Abbreviations**

AIIB: Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank  
ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations  
CAD: China-Africa Development Fund  
CNPC: China National Petroleum Company  
DRC: the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
FDI: Foreign direct investment  
FOCAC: Forum on China-Africa Cooperation  
GDP: Gross domestic product  
GNPOC: Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company  
IMF: International Monetary Fund  
MINURSO: United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara  
MINUSMA: United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali  
MINUSTAH: United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti  
MONUC: United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
MONUSCO: United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo  
MOOTW: Military operations other than war  
NATO: North Atlantic Trade Organization  
ONUB: United Nations Operation in Burundi  
ONUMOZ: United Nations Operations in Mozambique  
PEOC: Petro Energy Operating Company  
UN: United Nations  
UNAMA: United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan  
UNAMIC: United Nations Advanced Mission in Cambodia  
UNIFIL: United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon  
UNIKOM: United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission  
UNISFA: United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei  
UNFICYP: United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus  
UNMEE: United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea  
UNMIBH: United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina  
UNMID: United Nations Mission in Darfur  
UNMIK: United Nations Mission in Kosovo  
UNMIL: United Nations Mission in Liberia  
UNMIS: United Nations Mission in Sudan  
UNMISS: United Nations Mission in South Sudan  
UNOCI: United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire  
UNOMIL: United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia  
UNSMIS: United Nations Mission in Syria  
UNTAET: United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor  
UNTAC: United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia  
UNTSO: United Nations Truce Supervision Organization  
US: United States  
USD: United States dollars  
WTO: World Trade Organization

## Introduction

On September 28, 2015, China's President Xi Jinping gave a speech to the United Nations (UN) announcing China would delegate a portion of the China-UN Peace and Development Fund towards UN peacekeeping activities.<sup>1</sup> Earlier that same year, China sent its first infantry battalion to the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and equipped it with drone technology, armored carriers, antitank missiles, mortars and other heavy weapons.<sup>2</sup> By the end of 2018, China had over 2,500 deployed personnel across eight missions, and created an 8,000 strong UN peacekeeping standby force, dedicated to carrying out the .<sup>3</sup> It is now the tenth largest UN troop contributor, and the second largest financial contributor to UN peacekeeping operations.<sup>4</sup> Though China has been contributing to UN peacekeeping operations since 1991, China's commitment to UN peacekeeping is greater than ever been before. Increasingly, China's peacekeeping contributions have become a central aspect of China's rising global power as a part of "China's Peaceful Development" strategy.

China's economic dominance is omnipresent in any discussion of China's rising power. China currently has the third largest Gross Domestic Product (GDP) behind Europe and the United States, respectively.<sup>5</sup> According to a recent PriceWaterhouse Coopers report the Chinese economy will surpass the US sometime around 2030, and by 2050 it "will be the largest economy in the world by a significant margin."<sup>6</sup> China's economic dominance can also be seen in its increased investments abroad and expanding international trade networks. Through initiatives such as the Belt and Road, and extensive foreign direct investment (FDI) in Africa and Latin America in particular, Chinese economic expansion is a central point of China's recent global engagement.

Solidly grounded in former Chinese President Deng Xiaoping's economic reform, Chinese global engagement has always centered around economic expansion.<sup>7</sup> This is true both of China's internal adjustments, namely introducing a national market economy, and international adjustments, including increased international trade. Internally, China has undergone significant changes to its economic system. Through domestic economic reforms stemming from Deng Xiaoping's "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics," the Chinese economy has shifted from a strict Marxist economy to allow for economic liberalization.<sup>8</sup> Similarly, China's external engagement has also been characterized by its "Going Out" (走出去) policy, which has pushed Chinese economics towards international investments.<sup>9</sup> In particular, one area that has garnered significant international attention is China's investments in Africa.

Chinese economic interests in Africa are increasingly diverse in nature. From granting large development loans to states across the continent to formalized foreign direct investment, China and Chinese companies have an increasingly high economic stake in African development. During the 2018 Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC) summit, China committed 60 billion United States dollars (USD) to government assistance and investment financing over the course of three years. Proposing to set aside 10 billion USD of China's overall financing to go towards development, Xi Jinping committed to increasing private sector investment across Africa.<sup>10</sup>

Over the last few decades the African continent has not only been at the heart of Chinese development financing, but has also been home to some of the globe's greatest instability. Currently seven out of the fourteen active UN peacekeeping missions are located in Africa, with five of the seven being the largest missions in terms of deployed personnel overall.<sup>11</sup> Given the depth of Chinese economic interests across the African continent, security has become

increasingly important. China has a vested interest in promoting security across the African continent to protect its economic investments. One way to accomplish that is through UN peacekeeping operations. Of the seven current missions across the African continent, China currently contributes to five.<sup>12</sup>

China has had a complex relationship with the international community for decades. China did not join the International Monetary Fund (IMF), nor the World Bank, until the 1980s, and was largely inactive in the UN until the 1990s. Often viewed by China as mechanisms of Western dominance and US control, China has been hesitant to engage with established international institutions despite its desire to engage globally. Stressing non-hegemony, the Chinese have long appreciated and pushed for alternative options to the established international “liberal world order”. Most notably, China has made historic shifts economically, attempting to establish itself as the leader of the developing world facilitating South-South relations, and the creation of the Belt and Road Initiative, which place the Chinese as economic leaders outside the realm of the World Trade Organization (WTO), IMF or World Bank.<sup>13</sup> China has also established a number of conferences and regional investment organizations that mark its rising global influence, including FOCAC and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), which set it apart from established international institutions.

Combined with China’s growing global footprint, China’s interactions with the UN, and UN peacekeeping in particular, should be seen as strategic moves that simultaneously result from and support China’s rising power. Often, emerging powers seek to establish themselves within the established international order and build their own international pacts and bonds.<sup>14</sup> China’s global engagement has increased dramatically over the past twenty years and has culminated in a shifting approach towards more active involvement in established institutions. China’s



peacekeeping contributions, however, go beyond Chinese interests in changing its engagement as the result of its rising power status. Its contributions are targeted in a manner that bolsters China's rise by supporting its strategic interests.

As China's global power continues to grow, so too has its engagement with the international order, specifically with regard to UN peacekeeping operations. Now the largest contributor of peacekeeping forces among the UN Security Council Permanent Five, China has become an avid supporter of UN peacekeeping missions. This marks a definite shift from the 1990s, and even the early 2000s, when Chinese support was relatively limited.<sup>15</sup>

For a country that has long been skeptical of the current international order, China's commitment to UN peacekeeping marks a significant shift in Chinese international interactions. Especially with regards to international institutions, China's peacekeeping contributions should be read as both a product of and support to China's global rise. As China has stepped onto the global stage, it has made strategic contributions to UN Peacekeeping Operations which support China's financial investments abroad and its broader economic interests, as a broader contribution to Chinese grand strategy and China's "peaceful rise".

Beginning with an overview of the current literature on Chinese motivations for making peacekeeping contributions to the UN in the first Chapter, I offer a discussion surrounding China's peacekeeping contribution motivations. In Chapter Two, I explore China's grand strategy, and the central role of economics. In Chapter Three, I layout the economic interests China has across the African continent, highlighting their resource-oriented nature. In Chapter Four, I explore the trends in Chinese peacekeeping contributions, underscoring the strategic calculus behind increases in China's peacekeeping contributions. In Chapter Five, I compare Chinese investments, the need for more security, and when and where the Chinese send

peacekeeping forces. Highlighting South Sudan as a case study of China's international economic engagement, security concerns, and large peacekeeping contributions, I display how China's economic interests influence Chinese peacekeeping contributions in practice. Finally, I conclude that China utilizes peacekeeping contributions in a strategic manner, aimed at safeguarding economic interests abroad and furthering Chinese grand strategy objectives.

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<sup>1</sup> Xinhua News, "Xi Jinping Speaks at the UN Peacekeeping Summit," [习近平出席联合国维和峰会并发表讲话] *Xinhua News*, September 9, 2015. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-09/29/c\\_1116705308.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-09/29/c_1116705308.htm); Translation available through UN at [https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/70/70\\_ZH\\_en.pdf](https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/70/70_ZH_en.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> David Smith, "China to Send 700 Combat Troops to South Sudan," *The Guardian*, December 23, 2014.

<sup>3</sup> Xinhua News, "Xi Jinping Speaks at the UN Peacekeeping Summit," [习近平出席联合国维和峰会并发表讲话] *Xinhua News*, September 9, 2015. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-09/29/c\\_1116705308.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2015-09/29/c_1116705308.htm); Translation available through UN at [https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/70/70\\_ZH\\_en.pdf](https://gadebate.un.org/sites/default/files/gastatements/70/70_ZH_en.pdf); United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Summary of Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping by Country, Mission and Post*, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations December 31, 2018 Report, (2018). [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3\\_country\\_and\\_mission\\_10.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3_country_and_mission_10.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Summary of Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping by Country, Mission and Post*, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations December 31, 2018 Report, (2018). [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3\\_country\\_and\\_mission\\_10.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3_country_and_mission_10.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> International Monetary Fund, *World Economic Outlook Database*, International Monetary Fund (January 2019 updated) Accessed: February 21, 2019. <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2018/02/weodata/index.aspx>

<sup>6</sup> PriceWaterhouse Coopers, "The Longview: How will the Global Economic Order Change by 2050?" *PriceWaterhouse Coopers*, February 2017, 3.

<sup>7</sup> Vance Cable, "Deng: Architect of the Chinese Superpower," in *From Deng to Xi: Economic Reform, the Silk Road, and the Return of the Middle Kingdom*, LSE Ideas special report 23, May 2017, 2.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Hongying Wang, "A Deeper Look at China's 'Go Out' Policy," CIGI Commentary, March 2016. [https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/hongying\\_wang\\_mar2016\\_web.pdf](https://www.cigionline.org/sites/default/files/hongying_wang_mar2016_web.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> Yun Sun, "China's 2018 Financial Commitments to Africa: Adjustment and Recalibration," *Brookings Institute* (blog), September 5, 2018.

<sup>11</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Summary of Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping by Country, Mission and Post*, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations December 31, 2018 Report, (2018). [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3\\_country\\_and\\_mission\\_10.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3_country_and_mission_10.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Xinhua, "'China is a Leader of South-South Cooperation' —the Third 'Developing Country Research Leadership' Summit Discusses China's Development Achievements," ["中国是南南合作积极领导者—第三届发展中国家金融领袖研讨项目专家热议中国发展成就"] *Xinhua News*, May 28, 2018. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2018-05/28/c\\_129881174.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2018-05/28/c_129881174.htm)

<sup>14</sup> Pinar Tank, "The Concept of 'Rising Power'," NOREF Policy Brief, June 2012, 3-4.

<sup>15</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Summary of Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping by Country, Mission and Post*, United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations December 31, 2018 Report, (2018). [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3\\_country\\_and\\_mission\\_10.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/3_country_and_mission_10.pdf)

## **Chapter I. Why Does China Contribute?**

China's increasing involvement in peacekeeping operations is highly particular. It has not contributed troops evenly across time or location. Rather, China's troop contribution shifts have been targeted. Sending more troops after Hu Jintao became president in 2003, and again shifting towards greater training commitment and establishing a standby force under current president Xi Jinping, China's contributions are not linear.<sup>1</sup> China's contributions have also been concentrated to certain missions. Though China currently contributes to eight missions, a majority of the contribution are located in one mission: the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).<sup>2</sup> Understanding the nature with which China contributes to UN peacekeeping operations is a central aspect of understanding why China has become such a dominant peacekeeping contributor.

Ascertaining where and why China sends peacekeepers requires analyzing both China's specific deployments, and the context within which these deployments are made. Though China's rhetoric surrounding its peacekeeping contributions overwhelmingly portrays China's contributions as altruistically motivated, the costs associated with large contributions are high.<sup>3</sup> For instance, the death of three Chinese peacekeepers in 2015 sparked domestic concern that perhaps China's contributions were not worth the cost.<sup>4</sup> Compounded with China's vocal commitment to sovereignty and noninterference, if China were not benefiting in some way from its contributions, it would likely choose not to send troops.

Understanding when and why China has stepped up its UN peacekeeping troop contributions centers around two foundational explanations: (1) Chinese troop contributions are a rational decision, made by rational actors, and (2) China's troop contributions function within a larger model of China's growing status as a global power. Regarding the former, assuming that

China's actions are rational and rationally driven is useful to extrapolate cost/benefit analyses surrounding Chinese decision-making with regard to peacekeeping contributions. This assumption also asserts that if China is making large contributions in the manner that it has, then the benefits must outweigh the costs. This means that even if China does not say it has made a strategic calculus in favor of certain benefits, its actions do. The later, on the other hand, assumes that this decision must be part of a larger strategy. This situates the benefits China perceives and receives from these contributions within a larger context of Chinese grand strategy, underscoring the implications of China's shifting approach to UN peacekeeping operations within China's foreign policy. Together, these two explanations form the core of both the larger literature surrounding China's peacekeeping contributions, and my analysis.

While the current literature offers important insight into the strategic calculations that drive Chinese peacekeeping contributions, it tends to lack in one particularly important aspect — Chinese economic considerations. Often focusing on the role that China's peacekeeping contributions play in China's "peaceful rise" narrative, underscoring the political and military benefits that come along with the ways that China contributes to UN missions, the current literature largely ignores the centrality of Chinese economic interests within peacekeeping contributions and Chinese grand strategy more broadly. Though political and military considerations are a strong component of China's peacekeeping contribution decision-making, economic considerations appear far more central. This is true both in terms of when and where China has decided to contribute troops, and as a part of greater Chinese grand strategy. Economic interests not only serve as a foundational element of China's global engagement but also as a continued interest of the state. Therefore, evaluating the economic benefits is necessary not only to understand Chinese peacekeeping contributions in their own right, but the larger

deployment of Chinese foreign policy to support its grand strategy concerns. China's economic interests also offer a better explanation for how and why China contributes to UN missions in such a targeted manner.

## **China Benefits**

When exploring the ways in which China's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations interact with larger Chinese national interests, it is important to focus on the benefits to these interests that troop contributions can offer. In other words, understanding what interests drive China to continue contributing troops to UN peacekeeping operations, and equally important, what drives China to increase its contributions to UN peacekeeping operations are critical. One way to determine the driving mechanisms is through the lens that examines benefits China receives both directly, and indirectly from UN peacekeeping contributions. China's continued commitment to UN peacekeeping operations suggests that the benefits China receives must outweigh the costs and hold sway over Chinese decision-making processes. Often, the literature focuses on the military and political benefits as the interests which drive China's commitment to UN peacekeeping operations.

### *Military Benefits*

Since Hu Jintao announced that China would begin to undertake "historic new missions" (新的历史使命) on Christmas Eve in 2004, the Chinese military has gradually prioritized conducting military operations other than war (MOOTW) to further develop the Chinese military and otherwise project China's military capacity to engage with global peace and security objectives.<sup>5</sup> As outlined in the 2008 White Papers, China views participating in UN peacekeeping missions as a key mission of the Chinese military, and an important part of

MOOTW.<sup>6</sup> Participating in UN peacekeeping has also provided practical experience for Chinese security forces, which have bolstered other MOOTW, including Chinese anti-piracy campaigns in the Gulf of Aden, and domestic riot-control capabilities.<sup>7</sup>

Scholars assert that China's peacekeeping contributions serve to benefit the Chinese military both by providing China with "boots on the ground experience," and furthering Chinese military diplomacy. For instance, Lieutenant Phillippe D. Rogers asserts that China's experiences in Western Sahara, in particular, have given Chinese military observers valuable tactical and operational experience.<sup>8</sup> More broadly, Chinese military officers also have the opportunity to interact with foreign military personnel and develop and strengthen Chinese military clout.<sup>9</sup> Working alongside foreign troops, Chinese personnel, often trained for specialized tasks such as engineering, logistical and medical support, exhibit highly skilled qualities that offer tangible support (such as rebuilding roads or needed medical support, which are more tangible to local population in the short term than democracy or other intangible goods) and further develop the role of China's desired image as a peacefully rising power. In particular, these troop contributions give credence to China's claim as a "responsible power", a term associated with Chinese government officials and intellectuals assertion that China is responsibly using its power to promote "mutually beneficial development" and greater peace.<sup>10</sup>

While military modernization plays a role in China's peacekeeping contributions, the role of MOOTW is often overstated. Specifically, though MOOTW were an early component of China's peaceful rise campaign, aiming to project China's rise and China's growing military capacity as an apparatus for furthering peace, they do not explain the targeted nature of China's peacekeeping contributions. If China were sending troops mainly to expand their MOOTW operations and gain operational experience, it would likely continuously increase its troops

deployments rather than target increases based on location. Larger deployments across a wide range of missions would yield the most beneficial outcome for the Chinese military, in that it would allow the Chinese to gain experience across a variety of climates and interact with more foreign troops, creating more opportunities to further modernize the Chinese military. Sending more troops indiscriminately would also aid China's MOOTW implementation – showing that its commitment is broad-based. China's peacekeeping contributions, however, do not reflect this. Instead, China's troop contributions have been targeted, signaling some other strategic calculus.

### *Political Benefits*

To understand the reasons why China contributes to the UN in increasingly large numbers and with new infantry troops it is necessary to understand the decisive nature of China's shifting peacekeeping contributions. Understanding the targeted nature of China's troop contributions is key. According to Meicen Sun, China's targeted, or as she refers to them, "discrete", troop increases indicate that "abrupt shifts in the top-level political calculus [is likely the] driving force" behind China's peacekeeping contributions.<sup>11</sup> She therefore, like many other scholars, argues that China's peacekeeping contributions must be politically motivated.<sup>12</sup> Perceived and received political benefits are the most cited reason for China's peacekeeping contributions. In particular, scholars assert that contributing to UN peacekeeping missions serves to benefit the Chinese on two main fronts: Taiwan, and the continued development and maintenance of diplomatic relationships abroad.<sup>13</sup>

Perhaps the most contentious issue in Chinese foreign policy has long been the issue of Taiwan. For the Chinese, Taiwan is simply a province that has not come back under the People's Republic of China fold yet.<sup>14</sup> For the Taiwanese, independence is a high priority.<sup>15</sup> Though

Taiwan's constitution upholds the Chinese claim to the island nation, Taiwan's claim to sovereignty has gained international support, with a number of states including Honduras, Haiti and fifteen others, recognizing Taiwan's status as an independent state.<sup>16</sup> For China, this recognition is unacceptable. In recent years China has begun an at times not so quiet campaign to regain control of Taiwan, slowly convincing internationally recognized countries to renounce their diplomatic relations with Taiwan and recognize the People's Republic of China (Mainland China) as the sole government of China.<sup>17</sup> Through carrots and sticks, the Chinese government has successfully reduced the number of countries recognizing the Republic of China (Taiwan) to seventeen.<sup>18</sup> Somewhere between carrot and stick, China's commitment to UN peacekeeping operations can be leveraged to shift states towards the "One-China" policy which recognizes the People's Republic of China as the sole sovereign China.<sup>19</sup> In Liberia, for instance, instead of vetoing the UN mission in Liberia on the basis that Liberia recognized Taiwan, it used the malleable state of Liberian politics to pressure the post-conflict state to recognize the "One-China" policy, offering aid and peacekeeping support in return.<sup>20</sup>

China's peacekeeping contributions are also deployed to promote Chinese diplomacy abroad. More specifically, scholars assert that Chinese peacekeepers are deployed as a mechanism to express resolve for peace and security in the case of existing relationships, and aid Chinese projections as "responsible" global power.<sup>21</sup> China's peacekeeping contributions are aimed at furthering a positive image of China.<sup>22</sup> China's peacekeeping contributions both give credit to its rhetorical commitments to global peace and security, and allow China to further its aspirations of becoming a major power by providing important material assets and contributions at a time when multidimensional peacekeeping is overstretched.<sup>23</sup> This physical commitment is presumed to legitimize China's "responsible power" and "peaceful rise" narratives and further



establish new diplomatic relations while strengthening existing diplomatic ties.<sup>24</sup>

While both Taiwan and China's continued maintenance and development of new diplomatic relationships might serve to explain some aspects of China's increases, these alone are not sufficient to explain why China's contribution increases have been targeted. Regarding Taiwan, China has sent troops to Liberia, which quickly recognized the People's Republic of China, though it has also sent troops to Haiti, which still recognizes Taiwan. Both locations where China's usage of peacekeeping contributions to influence support for Taiwan seem targeted, the results differed significantly, making the targeted usage of peacekeeping contributions to sway post-conflict states on the "One-China" policy not universally applicable. These mixed results likely do not provide enough incentive for China to contribute troops as a tool on the Taiwan issue. While increasing and maintaining diplomatic relations might provide greater incentives for China to increase its troop contributions, assessing peacekeeping as a tool for advancing China's "peaceful rise" image, this also does not adequately explain China's targeted increases. If in fact China was motivated by increasing its overall diplomatic image, it would likely send troops across all missions indiscriminately. As this is not the case for how China has increased its troop contributions to the UN, something else must be at the heart of China's decision-making.

A cornerstone of China's "peaceful rise" strategy, economic success plays an elemental role in China's growing global influence; both as a means to further China's foreign policy interests, and to strengthen the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy. It is thus an interest that not only allows China to further other political interests, but is a security concern for the future of the Chinese Communist Party regime. Political motivations, therefore, should actually be viewed in the context of economic interests. Further, given the targeted nature of China's

peacekeeping contribution increases, broad political calculations regarding Taiwan or China's global perception do not adequately explain the strategically targeted nature of China's large contributions. Chinese economic interests are clear and decipherable, and often form the basis of China's strongest diplomatic ties, making the strategic calculus to increase peacekeeping contributions to certain missions to promote security for the environment where Chinese economic assets are located a better explanation for how and why China has increased its troop contributions.

### *Economic Benefits*

Economic interests have long played a central role in China's growth as an emerging global power. From the People's Republic of China's early interactions with the international community in the 1970s and 1980s, economics have been a primary driver for and continued concern of Chinese global engagement. Both as a means to legitimize the regime and reach its strategic interests abroad, nearly every aspect of China's rise to global power has been connected to economic interests. Still under Chinese Communist Party rule today, this concern over economics as a legitimizing force, and now as a projection of power, remain crucial elements of China's policies towards the international community.<sup>25</sup>

As a significant number of China's larger deployments of peacekeepers have been to Africa, where China has developed a large economic footprint, questions have arisen over the potential economic benefits that may sway Chinese decision-making processes on the subject. The arguments here often center around the potential protection of Chinese economic interests abroad, focusing specifically on broad analysis of Chinese trade and investments in Africa in comparison with China's contributions to a number of UN missions across the continent.<sup>26</sup> While often cursorily mentioned in a number of studies, this is by far the least explored interest, with

little comprehensive research underscoring the correlation between deployment locations and economic considerations.<sup>27</sup>

Most economic interest analyses falls into one of two categories: tension between decision-making government entities, and case study analysis. When viewed in terms of the former, analyzing the intergovernmental tensions among the People's Liberation Army and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the conclusion remains that China's economic and peacekeeping decision-making tracks operate separately.<sup>28</sup> Intergovernmental rivalries and bureaucratic competition ensure that economic concerns play little if any role in China's peacekeeping contribution decision-making.<sup>29</sup> In essence, the myth that China operates as a "China INC" is misinformed, and irrelevant to Chinese peacekeeping considerations.<sup>30</sup>

The other avenue of analysis focuses on case studies into key UN peacekeeping missions where China has contributed significant numbers of troops, and the role of Chinese economic interests in that mission location. This analysis often demonstrates that economics play at least a tacit role in China's decision-making to send peacekeepers, if only to certain locations.<sup>31</sup> For instance, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Sudan, where China had resource considerations (minerals in the DRC, and oil in Sudan) it sent relatively large contingents of peacekeeping troops, police, and military observers.<sup>32</sup> In particular, case study analysis of China's peacekeeping deployments in the DRC, Sudan, and Liberia, the Chinese decision to increase UN peacekeeping contributions over the past few decades have definite economic considerations.<sup>33</sup> For instance, Fanie Herman notes that during the Hu Jintao era, China's peacekeeping contributions are strategically motivated by China's economic interests, especially in Africa by way of important resources.<sup>34</sup>

Though analysis centered around tensions and rivalries among the competing bodies in

China's government is useful for understanding China's foreign policy dynamics, these tensions ultimately do not hinder China's use of peacekeeping operations as a strategic tool tinged with economic interest.<sup>35</sup> Economic interests are a central concern of the Chinese Communist Party for a number of strategic reasons. Even if bureaucratic tensions significantly hampered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) ability to influence People's Liberation Army (PLA) deployments to UN peacekeeping operations; both the MFA and PLA are ultimately controlled by the Chinese Communist Party, which dictates what China's most important strategic interests are and how to pursue or protect them, making its concerns the guiding force for China's peacekeeping contributions. Specific case studies offer helpful insight, however, they often are limited to a specific time or place, offering only a piece of the whole. This study focuses on offering a more comprehensive understanding of China's peacekeeping contributions in the context of Chinese grand strategy. Highlighting the correlation between China's growing economic interests and peacekeeping contributions directly, I underscore the growing influence that China's economic interests play on China's peacekeeping contributions.

### **“China's Peaceful Rise” and Chinese Grand Strategy**

There is no debate that China is a rising global power, and that it has developed and implemented a strategy to facilitate its rise to great power status. China has increased its international footprint and sought to strategically market itself as a benevolent great power, making reference to itself as a “responsible power” (负责任的大国). Long critical of Western powers and their dominance in the international order, China has begun to rise within the institutions of the current order, challenging Western dominance from within the current international community framework.<sup>36</sup> One of the ways that it has done so is through its peacekeeping contributions to the UN. Often referred to as “China's peaceful rise” or “China's

peaceful development,” China’s has taken steps to portray its ascent as benevolent and peaceful in order to counterbalance the fear of Chinese global dominance.<sup>37</sup> According to “China’s peaceful rise” strategy, there are two key elements to China’s rise in a benevolent and mutually beneficial manner: peace and economics.

Projecting this image of “China’s peaceful rise” requires China interact with certain institutions and processes in particular ways. For instance, projecting itself as a “responsible power” requires a greater commitment to international peace and security, but in a manner that lines up with Chinese principles.<sup>38</sup> One important principle is China’s intense concern for international multilateralism. Highly critical of U.S. intervention and certain NATO missions, China has long drawn the line for its support for peace and security involvement squarely with the stipulation that the interaction be truly multilateral.<sup>39</sup> Not so implicitly associated with China’s intense concern for multilateralism is China’s commitment to state sovereignty and noninterference, which keeps precedents of intervention from being used against it in the future.<sup>40</sup> In order for China to engage with established international peace and security apparatuses as expected of great powers, its involvement must be (1) multilateral, and (2) protect state sovereignty.<sup>41</sup>

Positioning Chinese peacekeeping contributions within this narrative offers a number of important perspectives on China’s rise more broadly and the important political and military benefits from Chinese peacekeeping contributions. Chinese engagements with the UN in this manner allow China to not only further its peaceful rise narrative, but to actively shape future narratives of global power.<sup>42</sup> Over the past twenty years, China has been aiming to portray itself as a “responsible power,” by promoting the narrative that it is responsible through actions which show China’s resolve for global peace and development while respecting territorial

sovereignty.<sup>43</sup> This “responsible power” narrative offers a critique of Western modes of engagement as not “responsible” because they do not respect territorial sovereignty, and non-interference as exhibited in extra-UN missions including NATO campaigns in Serbia, and US invasions in Afghanistan.<sup>44</sup> China’s support for UN peacekeeping operations not only solidifies China’s commitment to global peace and security, but also furthers its narrative as a “responsible power” as well.<sup>45</sup> UN peacekeeping operations allows China to counter, co-opt, and circumvent the United States’ influence to achieve Chinese security interests on Chinese terms (maintaining respect for sovereignty and noninterference) without directly confronting the US or the West.<sup>46</sup> Increasing its contributions to the UN, China is able to bolster its “responsible power” narrative by supporting security through an organization built on the foundation of respect for state territorial sovereignty.<sup>47</sup> Providing tangible support for international peace in this way gives credence to China’s principles of sovereignty and non-interference, allowing it to project itself as a benevolent rising power, while furthering its strategic interests through the benefits it receives.<sup>48</sup>

While this is useful to understanding Chinese peacekeeping contributions with regards to the “peace” aspect of China’s “peaceful rise” strategy, it neglects the other prong of this strategy — economic development. In 2011, China specifically characterized its “peaceful rise” narrative as “China’s Peaceful Development,” highlighting the centrality of China’s economic development in its outward engagement.<sup>49</sup> It further stated that one of the key ways in which China would engage globally to promote “China’s peaceful development” narrative is through “mutually beneficial development.”<sup>50</sup> China’s recent loans, investments, and global trade initiatives have reflected this development-heavy approach to international engagement. This approach is not only a key element of “China’s peaceful rise” as an element of the “peaceful

development” strategy, it is also a means to project its growing power in a peaceful manner. Offering “mutually beneficial development” as the mode for furthering China’s rise both furthers Chinese economic goals and projects to other countries that China is not simply supporting development projects out of self-concern. It is therefore important to not only underscore the role of “peace” within China’s rise, but “development” as well. This means understanding China’s peacekeeping contributions in the context of China’s “peaceful development” and dominating economic considerations.

## Conclusion

This paper seeks to address these gaps in research. Specifically focusing on China’s peacekeeping contributions in Africa given the importance of Chinese economic interests in Africa, and China’s extensive troop contributions to UN peacekeeping missions across the African continent, it seeks to situate China’s contributions within its greater grand strategy and economic grand strategy in particular. Arguing that China’s economic concerns have been a driving force of Chinese foreign policy, I assert that China’s peacekeeping contributions are driven by the same economic forces. While China also receives other benefits from its peacekeeping contributions, economic concerns are increasingly the central interest driving China’s peacekeeping contributions.

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- <sup>13</sup> Meicen Sun, "A Bigger Bang for a Bigger Buck," 347; Fanie Herman, "China's PKO in Liberia (UNMIL)," in *China's African Peacekeeping Decision-Making in the Hu Jintao Era*, 122-155, (New Delhi: Vij Books, 2015): 106; Yin He, *China's Changing Policy on UN Peacekeeping Operations*, 10-11; Chin-Hao Huang, "Principles and Praxis of Chinese Peacekeeping," 263.
- <sup>14</sup> G. Andy Chang; T.Y. Wang, "Taiwanese or Chinese? Independence or Unification? An Analysis of General Differences in Taiwan," *Journal of Asian and African Studies*, Vol. 40, No. 1. 2005, 30.
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- <sup>23</sup> Chin-Hao Huang, "Principles and Praxis of Chinese Peacekeeping," 257; Courtney Richardson, "A Responsible Power?" 286.
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- <sup>26</sup> See William J. Norris, "Economics and China's Grand Strategy," in *Chinese Economic Statecraft*, 55-56; Jason G. Tower, "Belts, Roads, and Battlegrounds: Chinese Outbound Initiatives in Conflict and Post-Conflict Settings," *Changing Landscape of Assistance to Conflict-Affected States: Emerging and Traditional Donors and Opportunities for Collaboration Policy Brief #5*, (Washington, DC: Stimson Center, January 2017) 5-6; Chin-Hao Huang, "Principles and Praxis of Chinese Peacekeeping," 266.
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<sup>36</sup> Courtney J. Richardson, “A Responsible Power? China and the UN Peacekeeping Regime,” *International Peacekeeping* 18, No. 3 (2011): 288.

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<sup>42</sup> Courtney J. Richardson, “A Responsible Power? China and the UN Peacekeeping Regime,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 18, No. 3. June 15, 2011. 286-287.

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid, 288.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 288.

<sup>46</sup> Gill Bates, “Sovereignty and Intervention,” In *Rising Star: China’s New Security Diplomacy*, (Washington, D.C.: Brookings Institution Press, 2010), 105.

<sup>47</sup> Courtney J. Richardson, “A Responsible Power? China and the UN Peacekeeping Regime,” *International Peacekeeping*, Vol. 18, No. 3. June 15, 2011. 286-287.

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## **Chapter II. Chinese Economics and Grand Strategy**

China's rise has been built on the basis of its economic success. This success is both the force that has projected China forward and safeguarded its larger strategic interests. In the late 1980s when Deng Xiaoping began to implement his domestic economic reforms, commonly referred to as "Socialism with Chinese characteristics," Chinese state-owned oil companies were the first to go out and engage with global markets, breaking Chinese isolationism.<sup>1</sup> In 2001, China became a member of the World Trade Organization (WTO) as China's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) increased sharply and their presence as an international trading powerhouse became undeniable.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, China's economy is set to surpass the US as the largest economy by 2030.<sup>3</sup> In 2013, China announced the Belt and Road Initiative, a global economic development initiative linking China to new and existing economic trade partners. In nearly every stage of China's growth into its new role as a global power, China's economic interests have played a prominent role in not only facilitating its rise but also solidifying its power.

The continuation of this economic success is a central element of China's grand strategy, both in terms of how China defines itself as an international actor and as a strategic concern. China often refers to itself as a leader of the developing world by facilitating "south-south cooperation." In May 2018, during a "Developing Country Leadership Seminar" held in Beijing, Xi Jinping expressed that China's economic projects such as the Belt and Road Initiative, the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, and the China Development Bank, underscore China's commitment to economic cooperation and solidify its role as a leader of the developing world.<sup>4</sup> Expressly stating that China's economic development has created a model for other developing countries, China's development has not only facilitated China's rise, but is a central aspect of its

continued growth.<sup>5</sup>

While economic interests are a concern for any state actor, China's concern in this regard is especially deep. China's economic interests have not only been the bedrock of China's global engagement, but have been a key element of Chinese security as well. Though the Chinese Communist Party maintains a strong grip over the Chinese state through repressive measures including strict censorship and mass surveillance, it does so because the government's legitimacy is constantly under question. Established under Mao Zedong, China's current Communist Party has shifted away from state-controlled industry to a more market-based economy, leaving it separated from its original Marxist revolutionary roots.<sup>6</sup> Having brought large swaths of the Chinese population out of poverty, China's economic reforms have also allowed the Chinese Communist Party to distance itself from the tyranny of Mao's regime by connecting to the very Marxist roots of Mao's revolution – social and economic prosperity.<sup>7</sup> Continued economic success is therefore, of high priority to keep domestic unrest at bay, and make good on promises to bring prosperity to the Chinese masses.<sup>8</sup> Further, China's economic prosperity also benefits Chinese foreign policy interests. Garnering more economic wealth and power, China is, in turn, able to leverage this power to further its interests abroad in a manner in line with its larger security and political objectives.<sup>9</sup>

China's economic success forms the bedrock of much of Chinese grand strategy. For security of the regime, and for the continued success of China's great power projections, China must continue to develop its own economy and further its economic interests abroad. As such, China's economic interests dominate Chinese foreign policy. Seen in China's large investment and development projects globally, Chinese grand strategy is centrally concerned with the wellbeing of its economic assets. The debates, therefore, over the motivating factors which drive

China to contribute troops to UN peacekeeping operations should be viewed in the context of China's overarching economic grand strategy.

## **Grand Strategy**

Broadly defined as the way a state views itself in the international context and the strategies it employs to further its interests abroad, grand strategy can provide important explanations for the motivations and actions of states. The top-down structure of the Chinese government does allow for remarkable consistency regarding China's grand strategy. Though China's grand strategy objectives are carried out by the People's Liberation Army, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Commerce, and other actors, the Chinese Communist Party's centralized control China's grand strategy policy objectives are largely subject to the interests and strategies of the party. For the Chinese Communist Party, and therefore, the People's Republic of China, two of the most important facets of China's grand strategy are increasing China's global influence through "China's Peaceful Development," and protecting the continued growth and stability of the country.

In 2003, in response to growing Western ideas of the "China threat theory", Chinese intellectual Zheng Bijian conceived of a new theory to explain China's rise. He called it "China's Peaceful Rise"(中国和平的崛起).<sup>10</sup> Asserting that Deng Xiaoping's economic reforms form the basis for China's growth, China has the ability and political intention to rise peacefully. Instead of plundering and invading, "China's emergence thus far has been driven by capital, technology, and resources acquired through peaceful means."<sup>11</sup> Despite China's commitment to a peaceful rise, Zheng Bijian does assert that there are "three transcendences" that China must perform in order to rise peacefully: (1) transcend old modes of industrialization, finding alternatives to

resource competition; (2) transcend traditional means of great-power emergence, finding alternatives to the plundering and pursuit of global dominance as previous great powers; and (3) transcend outdated modes of social control, finding ways to construct a more harmonious socialist society, namely through democratization.<sup>12</sup> Since 2003, Zheng Bijian's "peaceful rise" concept has become a central aspect of China's grand strategy, though with a few caveats.<sup>13</sup> In particular, democratization is not an active priority for the Chinese government.

Now referred to as "China's Peaceful Development" (中国和平的发展), China remains highly concerned with conducting a peaceful rise to power. As stated in China's 2011 White Paper, "China will unswervingly follow the path of peaceful development."<sup>14</sup> Explicitly reaffirming China's commitment to development through Deng Xiaoping's "socialism with Chinese characteristics," China's current notions of "China's peaceful rise" as expressed by the government are slightly different from Zheng Bijian's theory.<sup>15</sup> Advocating that "China should develop itself through upholding world peace and contribute to world peace through its own development," the core of China's path to a peaceful rise is through development in line with Chinese values — namely, state-controlled development.<sup>16</sup> Essentially, China has taken on a "China's Peaceful Rise" projection in line with its communist values. Highlighting its commitments to pursuing a "harmonious world" and an "independent foreign policy of peace", China aims to project as a benevolent power, committed to peace and development.<sup>17</sup>

Referring often to the importance of "mutually beneficial development," one of the key mechanisms by which China has pursued a "peaceful development" strategy in through economic engagement. Specifically, focusing on global investments, trade, and financial cooperation, China's "peaceful development" is deeply linked to economic interactions, these have "mutual benefit" for both the Chinese and global development and peace.<sup>18</sup> Offering up

loans and infrastructure deals, China seeks to entice other developing countries to develop favorable relations with China not only to further Chinese development, but also China's global influence.<sup>19</sup> China has also begun to assert itself as a leader of the developing world, stating that its path to development should be viewed as a model for developing countries.<sup>20</sup> This projection – that China is a leader of the developing world based upon its economic success – indicates that China's economic success represents a path by which China aims to pursue greater international influence.

### *Economics and Chinese Grand Strategy*

Central to both the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy and stability, and China's expanding global influence in a manner in line with "China's Peaceful Rise," is the continued success of the Chinese economy. Following Mao Zedong's oppressive and violent rule, Deng Xiaoping shifted the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy away from revolutionary Marxism towards what has been called "socialism with Chinese characteristics." As he did so, he liberalized the Chinese economy, pulling millions out of poverty, and establishing the Chinese Communist Party's future commitment to both economic prosperity and continued socialist control.<sup>21</sup> The economic prosperity China has felt since Deng has also recently allowed China to leverage its economic might to further other foreign policy objectives through economic statecraft. Maintaining the continued success of the Chinese economy, therefore, is a core element of China's grand strategy.

Regarding the Chinese Communist Party, economic success has been the policy upon which it has justified its economic shift away from Mao's strict Marxist economy to the hybrid "socialism with Chinese characteristics" that dominates China's current economic and political structures. Following the devastating effects of Mao Zedong's regime, the Chinese Communist

Party remained wedded to Mao as the legitimating force of the party. He had won the Chinese Civil War, and installed the Chinese Communist Party as the legitimate government of the People's Republic of China. In fact, Mao was also the founder of the "People's Republic of China," leaving his legacy entangled with the legitimacy of the party. Mao's regime, however, also left some 2.95 million dead, and millions more traumatized, leaving the current Chinese Communist Party with the particularly difficult task of simultaneously drawing connections to Mao Zedong, while disassociating from the tyranny of his rule.<sup>22</sup> The way former President Deng Xiaoping, and other Chinese leaders have chosen to do so is through economic success.

Tackling the crippled economic system Mao had left behind, and maintaining strict control over national issues, Deng Xiaoping established the bedrock of China's current economy under the theory of "socialism with Chinese characteristics" (中国特色社会主义).<sup>23</sup> Aimed to keep China socialist, tying back to its party roots, while allowing for capitalist mechanisms of efficiency and productivity to bring about a more prosperous China, Deng argued that capitalism and socialism were essentially peas in the same pod aimed at granting prosperity to the masses.<sup>24</sup> He claimed that the only difference was that socialism relied on state planning, whereas capitalism relied on market forces of supply and demand.<sup>25</sup> Accepting that market economics could possibly help modernize the Chinese economy, he then hinted that the way forward for Chinese socialism was through capitalist practices.<sup>26</sup>

Under "socialism with Chinese characteristics" Deng Xiaoping constructed a fundamentally new China. A China that shed isolationism and embraced aspects of market-based capitalism, while maintaining its socialist political roots and strong state control. Aiming to bring prosperity to the Chinese people, his reforms soon bore fruit. Embracing Special Economic Zones, pushing corporations out into global markets, and initiating rural and agricultural

decentralization, Deng's policies resulted in annual economic growth at 9 percent from 1978 to 1989.<sup>27</sup> After a short lull in growth attributed to Chinese efforts to rein in budget deficits and inflation from 1989 to 1990, Chinese economic growth again exploded at the unprecedented rate of 12 percent.<sup>28</sup> This growth can be attributed to grain production increases, which skyrocketed from 300 million tons in 1977 to 400 million tons in 1984 and, in the process, lifting hundreds of millions of Chinese peasants out of poverty.<sup>29</sup> It is estimated that peasant income doubled from 1977 to 1984.<sup>30</sup> He delivered the economic prosperity he had promised, paving the way forward for the Chinese Communist Party and wedding it to providing strong economic goods to the people.

Recently, as China's economy has grown, it has also been able to leverage its economic success to further other foreign policy goals through economic statecraft. Keeping in line with its "peaceful development" strategy, China is able to pursue greater international power through non-military means. As William Norris writes, "China is entering a phase where it has the luxury of leveraging its growing economic clout to further its foreign policy goals."<sup>31</sup> Though China's economic statecraft has produced varied results, economic leverage has become a central element of China's rise because it allows China to further its own interests, including further economic interests, in a manner in line with the image of being a "responsible power" in line with its "peaceful development" strategy.

China has successfully deployed economic statecraft in a number of cases. For instance, in Cambodia, China offered 1.2 billion USD in grants and loans to the Cambodian government a few weeks after it had agreed to deport twenty ethnic Uighurs back to China to be prosecuted in conjunction with anti-government protests in China's Xinjiang province back in 2009.<sup>32</sup> Then, after the US State Department canceled a shipment of 200 surplus military trucks to Cambodia in



protest of the move, China responded by donating 257 trucks in their place.<sup>33</sup> Three years later, China's pledged loans to Cambodia reached 2.7 billion USD.<sup>34</sup> That same year, Cambodia blocked a joint statement at the ASEAN summit criticizing Chinese advances in the South China Sea.<sup>35</sup> On both accounts, China used the economic wealth it had accumulated to influence Cambodian actions. Accomplishing its goals through non-military means, China is able to simultaneously pursue foreign policy interests while upholding the image of being a "responsible power".

Emboldened, China has recently pursued more aggressive economic statecraft as well. In Sri Lanka, for instance, China continually granted Sri Lankan requests for loans and assistance on an ambitious port project despite reports that Sri Lanka could not feasibly repay them. Sri Lankan debt ballooned as the government struggled to make payments. After negotiations with the Chinese in late 2017, Sri Lanka handed the Hambantota port and over 15,000 acres of land to the Chinese for 99 years.<sup>36</sup> The port is only a few hundred miles off the shore of India, one of China's biggest rivals, and has potential strategic military and intelligence use.<sup>37</sup>

A clear win for Chinese economic statecraft strategically, the move was strongly condemned. Referencing this particular incident, the United States Vice President Mike Pence stated that "China has chosen economic aggression," and that the United States should attempt to counter its economic advances.<sup>38</sup> On the other hand, even the negative reactions against some of China's more recent economic statecraft are far less damaging to China's "Peaceful Rise" narrative than other forms of Chinese statecraft. China's more militaristic advances have received heavy international condemnation. For instance, China's aggressive advances in the South China Sea have been highly controversial, especially after China decided to ignore an International Court of Justice ruling against China's claims in the region.<sup>39</sup> Though China's advances in the South

China Sea have been condemned by many South East Asian states, Chinese economic statecraft in in the region has been generally well received.<sup>40</sup> Therefore, wielding economic statecraft in the place of military power as a means to further foreign policy interests abroad without using militaristic force which aids China's "peaceful rise" narrative.

In order to both support Chinese economic statecraft and CCP party legitimacy, China must maintain a strong and prosperous economy. The ability to effectively wield economic statecraft lies not only in state control, but also in economic size. The bigger the economy, the greater the capacity a state has to leverage its economics to pursue other foreign policy goals. For instance, if China were not able to afford to finance Sri Lanka's Hambantota port, it would not have been able to leverage Sri Lanka's subsequent debt as a way to obtain the port. Further, the maintenance of the Chinese Communist Party's legitimacy and stability relies on China's ability to deliver continued economic prosperity. Consequently, a prime concern of the Communist Party is the maintenance of China's economy both for regime legitimacy and stability, and the growth of its global power in line with its "peaceful rise" narrative. Providing the Chinese population with an elevated standard of living, the current Chinese Communist Party bases its legitimacy on the ability to continually guarantee this stability. This means that when and where China's economic assets are at risk, China has strong incentives to protect those assets for the sake of economic strength.

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<sup>1</sup> William J. Norris, "Securing Strategic Raw Materials," in *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control*, 67-106, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 72.

<sup>2</sup> World Bank, "China," [worldbank.org](https://data.worldbank.org/country/china), date accessed: February 22, 2019, <https://data.worldbank.org/country/china>

<sup>3</sup> PriceWaterhouse Coopers, "The Longview: How will the Global Economic Order Change by 2050?" *PriceWaterhouse Coopers*, February 2017, 3.

<sup>4</sup> Xinhua, "'China is a Leader of South-South Cooperation' —the Third 'Developing Country Research Leadership' Summit Discusses China's Development Achievements," [中国是南南合作积极领导者—第三届发展中国家金融

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Rana Miller, “Old Ghosts, New Memories: China’s Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 38(1), 119.

<sup>7</sup> Aaron Friedberg, “Globalization and Chinese Grand Strategy,” *Survival* 60, No. 1 (2018): 8

<sup>8</sup> William J. Norris, “Securing Strategic Raw Materials,” in *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control*, 67-106, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 72.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, 71.

<sup>10</sup> John L. Thornton, “Foreword,” in “*China’s Peaceful Rise*”: *Speeches of Zheng Bijian 1997-2004*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 2005). vi.

<sup>11</sup> Zheng Bijian, “China’s ‘Peaceful Rise’ to Great-Power Status,” *Foreign Affairs* 84, No. 5 (September 2005): 20.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 21-22.

<sup>13</sup> John L. Thornton, “Foreword,” in “*China’s Peaceful Rise*”: *Speeches of Zheng Bijian 1997-2004*, (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 2005), vi.

<sup>14</sup> Information Office of the State Council, *China’s Peaceful Development*, White Paper, September 2011. Accessible at [http://english.gov.cn/archive/white\\_paper/2014/09/09/content\\_281474986284646.htm](http://english.gov.cn/archive/white_paper/2014/09/09/content_281474986284646.htm)

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> China Power, “How Will the Belt and Road Initiative Advance China’s Interests,” *china power.csis.org*, Accessed March 5, 2019. <https://chinapower.csis.org/china-belt-and-road-initiative/>

<sup>20</sup> Xinhua, “‘China is a Leader of South-South Cooperation’ —the Third ‘Developing Country Research Leadership’ Summit Discusses China’s Development Achievements, [中国是南南合作积极领导者—第三届发展中国家金融领神研讨项目专家热议中国发展成就]” *Xinhua News*, May 28, 2018. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2018-05/28/c\\_129881174.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/world/2018-05/28/c_129881174.htm)

<sup>21</sup> Ken Moak, Miles W.N. Lee, “Deng Xiaoping Theory: Socialism with Chinese Characteristics,” in *China’s Economic Rise and its Global Impact*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015), 92.

<sup>22</sup> Yongyi Song, Chronology of Mass Killings during the Chinese Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Online Encyclopedia of Mass Violence, [online], published on: 25 August, 2011, accessed 20/02/2019, <https://www.sciencespo.fr/mass-violence-war-massacre-resistance/en/document/chronology-mass-killings-during-chinese-cultural-revolution-1966-1976>, ISSN 1961-9898; Rana Miller, “Old Ghosts, New Memories: China’s Changing War History in the Era of Post-Mao Politics”, *Journal of Contemporary History*, Vol 38(1), 117-131.

<sup>23</sup> Vince Cable, “Deng: Architect of the Chinese Superpower,” in *From Deng to Xi: Economic Reform, The Silk Road, and the Return of the Middle Kingdom*, Edited by Yu Jie. (London: LSE Ideas, 2017). 1-7.

<sup>24</sup> Ken Moak; Miles W. N. Lee, “Deng Xiaoping theory: Socialism with Chinese Characteristics,” in *China’s Economic Rise and its Global Impact*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015): 90

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 90.

<sup>27</sup> Vince Cable, “Deng: Architect of the Chinese Superpower,” in *From Deng to Xi: Economic Reform, The Silk Road, and the Return of the Middle Kingdom*, Edited by Yu Jie. (London: LSE Ideas, 2017), 5.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, 5.

<sup>31</sup> William J. Norris, “Economics and China’s Grand Strategy,” in *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control*, 44-65, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2016), 44.

<sup>32</sup> James Reilly, *China’s Economic Statecraft: Turning Wealth into Power*, Lowry Institute for International Policy, (2013), 2

<sup>33</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid, 2.

<sup>36</sup> Maria Abi-Habib, “How China Got Sri Lanka to Cough Up a Port,” *The New York Times*, June 25, 2018.

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<https://www.nytimes.com/2018/06/25/world/asia/china-sri-lanka-port.html>

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Mike Pence, *On the Administration's Policy Towards China*, Given at the Hudson Institute, October 4, 2018.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/remarks-vice-president-pence-administrations-policy-toward-china/>

<sup>39</sup> Tom Phillips; Oliver Holmes; Owen Bowcott, "Beijing Rejects Tribunal's Ruling in South China Sea Case," *The Guardian*, July 12, 2016, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2016/jul/12/philippines-wins-south-china-sea-case-against-china>

<sup>40</sup> Vannarith Chheang, *China's Economic Statecraft in Southeast Asia*, Yusuf Ishak Institute Analyse Current Events 45 (2018), 1

### **Chapter III. Economic Interests in Africa**

A large part of China's growing global footprint is its expanding role in global development. Recently, Chinese officials have even begun to refer to "China's Peaceful Rise" as "China's Peaceful Development," linking China's growing power directly to economic development. In particular, Africa has been the site of expansive Chinese support for international development as part of the Belt and Road Initiative. Last year, during the 2018 Forum on China Cooperation (FOCAC), Xi Jinping set up a 10 billion USD special fund for development financing to FOCAC participants.<sup>1</sup> He also committed 60 billion USD in financing to FOCAC members.<sup>2</sup> Though these development loans still pale in comparison to China's global foreign direct investment (FDI), constituting only 2.5 percent of all of China's global FDI in 2017 (making it the smallest among all continents that year), China's investments in Africa are particularly important to China as they relate directly to China's growing need for resources.<sup>3</sup>

The breakdown of China's financial investment commitments reveals these investments support specific types of development loans, which directly and indirectly benefit China's economy and global rise. According to the China Power Project, 60.5 percent of China's total development finance in Africa is composed of finance to African transportation (32 percent) and energy generation (28.5 percent) sectors.<sup>4</sup> This skewed composition suggests China's development finance in Africa is not only meant to increase inter-connectivity between China-Africa markets, but also an interest in enhancing China's own access to natural resources on the continent. Improving local transportation infrastructure allows for easier initial access to resources, as well as improved transportation of those resources. Improving local energy generation infrastructure also similarly aids China's search for natural resources, strengthening

extraction capabilities directly. Serving China's continuous need for natural resources, while simultaneously improving local infrastructure projecting China's "peaceful development" agenda, China's loans serve the country on two fronts.

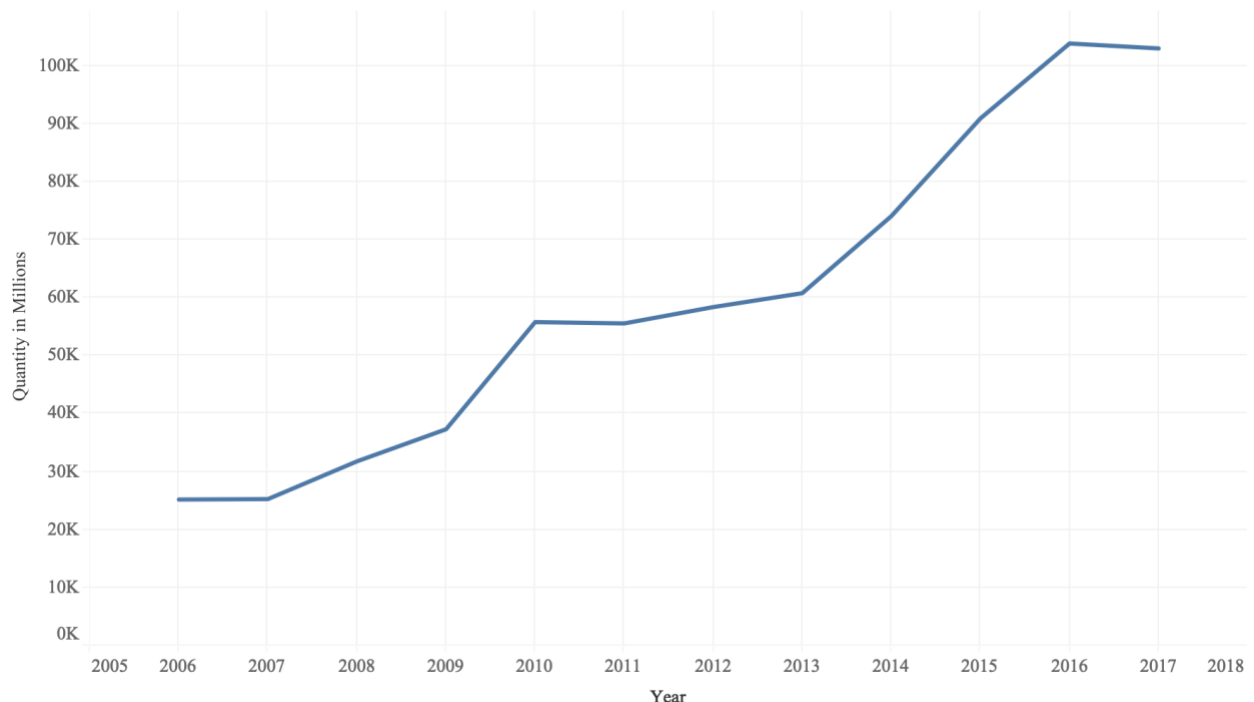
China's need for resources has ballooned, both as a result of and for the continuation of China's economic success. Oil, for instance, is high on China's list of needed resources. As China's economy has increased the standard of living, it has also developed a greater need for more energy. Compounded by China's declining domestic oil yields, China's economic growth rate has far exceeded its available supply of energy.<sup>5</sup> China has now become the second largest global oil importer, and has taken large stock in a number of overseas oil fields and oil subsidiaries.<sup>6</sup> Similarly, China's expanding economy has also expanded China's overall goods production, which in turn has increased China's need for resources to continue production. Recently referred to as the "Ravenous dragon" by *The Economist's* Edward McBride, China's search for resources is great.<sup>7</sup> China's continued economic growth is dependent upon cheap goods, labor, and resources produced in Africa and elsewhere, making China's trade and investments across the continent an important aspect of China's global economic interests.<sup>8</sup>

## **Economic Interests**

Especially through the Belt and Road Initiative China has been actively expanding its economic reach in a manner that strongly favors China's resource and export market needs. Marketed as "mutually beneficial" infrastructure development, many of the ways that China has been extending its economic reach specifically benefit its need for more resources. For instance, foreign direct investment (FDI) has been a significant aspect of China's global economic expansion, with an emphasis on FDI in sectors which benefit Chinese resource extraction operations.

Since 2005, China's outward FDI flows have gone from 2.5 billion USD to its peak of 45.8 billion USD in 2017.<sup>9</sup> Though FDI flows have fluctuated over the course of the last twelve years, they have recently garnered significant attention in connection with China's Belt and Road Initiative.<sup>10</sup> Increasing overtime, and especially since the Belt and Road Initiative was implemented, China outward FDI flows have had implications for China's growing economic interests abroad (see Figure 1). Since 2005, 35.8 percent of China's outward FDI has been used to finance energy projects.<sup>11</sup> Close behind energy, transportation represents the next largest portion of China's global FDI at 18.7 percent.<sup>12</sup> While on the surface transportation does not directly indicate Chinese resource concerns, bolstering transportation networks aids Chinese resource extraction operations in fundamental ways. For instance, in Tanzania, China's FDI and constriction contracts have been directly linked to Chinese resource transportation networks.<sup>13</sup>

Figure 1: Chinese FDI 2005-2018

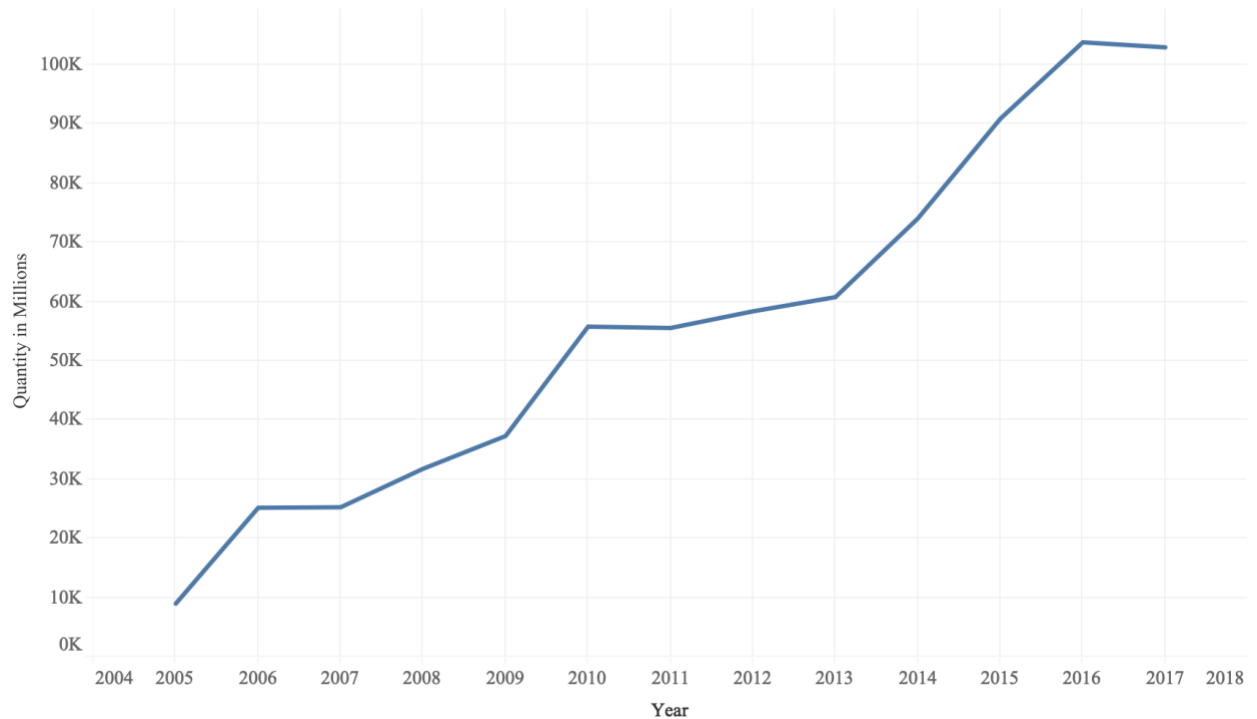


(American Enterprise Institute, *China Global Investment Tracker*, 2018)

A form of FDI which has made up a significant portion of China's FDI across Africa has been its construction contracts. As a part of the Belt and Road Initiative Chinese companies have been winning a number of big construction projects across the globe. Since 2005, Chinese construction contract revenues have increased significantly. In 2005 Chinese global construction contract revenues were around 9 billion USD.<sup>14</sup> In 2017, revenues had increased almost eight-fold, reaching 71 billion USD.<sup>15</sup> Despite a lull last year, Chinese construction contract revenues have now reached some 800 billion USD in total.<sup>16</sup> While Chinese construction contracts had been increasing steadily since 2005, after Xi's announcement of the Belt and Road Initiative in September of 2013 revenues saw a rapid increase (see Figure 2). The total revenues from construction contracts from September of 2013 until 2017 makes up over half of the total construction contract revenues since 2005, despite only accounting for around a third of the time period.<sup>17</sup>



Figure 2: Chinese Construction Contract Revenues 2005-2017



(American Enterprise Institute, *China Global Investment Tracker*, 2018)

As was the case with greater Chinese FDI flows, China's construction contracts are also mainly focused on procuring and maintaining Chinese access to natural resources. According to the American Enterprise Institute, the majority of these construction contracts are centered around the energy and transportation sectors.<sup>18</sup> This is especially true of contracts located in sub-Saharan Africa. Transportation (31.2 percent) and Energy contracts (41.2 percent) constituted 72.4 percent of China's construction contracts in the region from 2005 to 2018 (see Figure 3).<sup>19</sup> Though the total revenues from construction contracts in sub-Saharan Africa are lower than other regions, China's construction contracts here represent some of the riskiest because they are subject to the most host country instability.

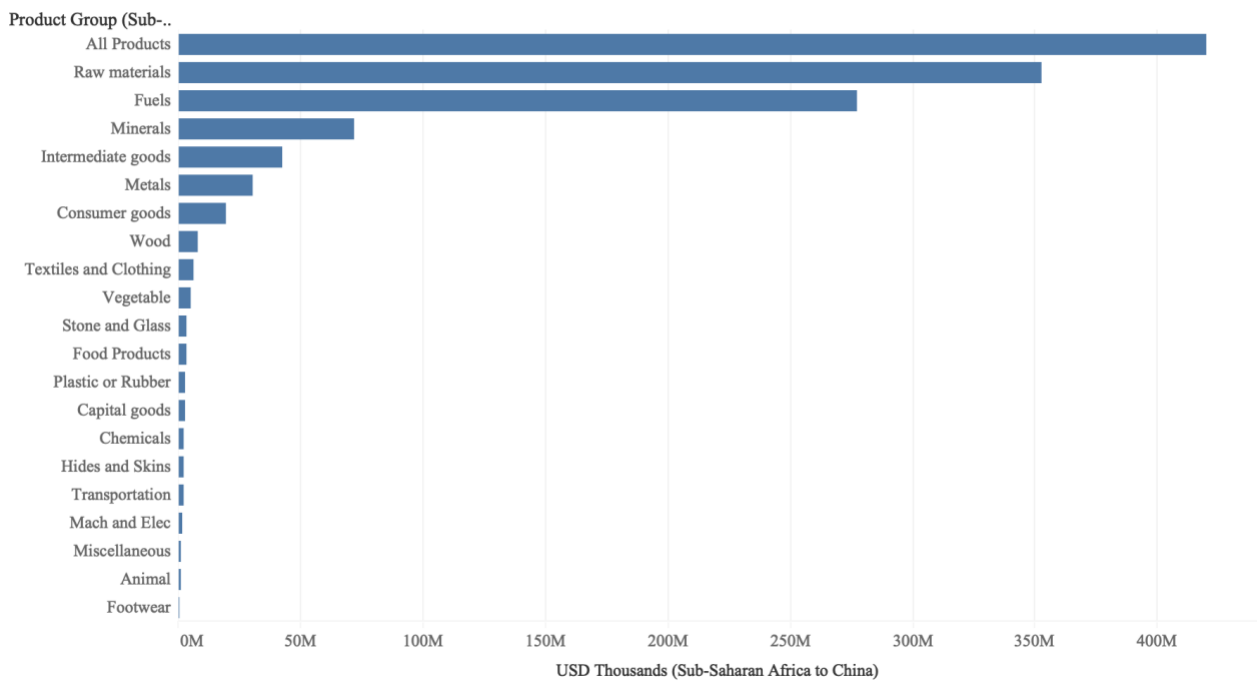
Figure 3: Contract Revenues by Region and Sector

Region	Sector1												
	Agricultu..	Chemicals	Energy	Entertain..	Health	Logistics	Metals	Other	Real estate	Technolo..	Tourism	Transport	Utilities
Arab Middle..	5,930	6,890	36,170	4,090	810	1,710	1,130	2,330	26,080	150	3,410	37,300	5,260
Australia	640		1,630		930		3,840	900	1,810	150		8,830	2,140
East Asia	450	4,230	60,260	1,350	150	110	5,660	1,370	19,570	4,590	3,390	31,090	7,230
Europe	580		15,050			1,760	300	920	2,570	2,220	3,360	12,760	350
North Ameri..			4,720	160	330	320	200	2,700	790	220	3,540	2,450	240
South Ameri..	8,590	480	18,910		790	280	790		9,000	700		8,900	870
Sub-Saharan..	12,220	1,030	89,060	1,810	4,080	1,410	940	6,050	24,990	5,770	1,610	80,020	16,080
USA		100		470							500	8,290	
West Asia	7,940	2,900	63,400		180	4,090	8,340	130	17,620	3,790	880	35,910	6,350

(American Enterprise Institute, *China Global Investment Tracker*, 2018)

China's resource hunger is further elucidated by its import trade relationships, especially in places like sub-Saharan Africa. Since 2013, China's top imports from Sub-Saharan Africa have been raw materials, fuels, minerals, intermediate goods, and metals. Though China also imports textiles and clothing, wood, food products and other miscellaneous items, the vast majority of Chinese imports from the region revolve around resources related to China's raw material needs. According to the World Bank, in 2017, 38 percent of all Sub-Saharan exports to China were raw materials (see Figure 4).<sup>20</sup>

Figure 4: Sub-Saharan Exports to China 1990-2017



(World Bank, 2018)

While resources have dominated China’s interests across Africa, to a lesser degree China is also concerned with developing strong relationships to establish strong export markets for it to sell its goods and finished products. As a part of the Belt and Road China has been seeking to strengthen trade relationships, expressing that it does not only seek resources, but promote development and a stronger China-Africa relationship.<sup>21</sup> In a speech given at the 2018 FOCAC summit held in Beijing, president Xi stated that “Africa is a historical and natural extension of the Belt and Road Initiative” and that “building the Belt and Road is building a bridge for further cooperation between China and Africa,” based on development and mutually beneficial trade.<sup>22</sup>

In search of resources, China has recently taken on a number of infrastructure projects to not only establish “mutually beneficial cooperation” and diplomatic trade relationships but to strengthen China’s access to resources, and to a lesser degree export markets for finished Chinese products. Unfortunately, however, China’s investments have also increasingly been

threatened by instability and conflict in investment countries. One response has been China's commitment to UN peacekeeping operations via targeted increased contributions to both secure existing resource extraction operations, and to establish greater diplomatic ties to host states.

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<sup>1</sup> Yun Sun, "China's 2018 Financial Commitments to Africa: Adjustment and Recalibration," *Brookings Institute* (blog), September 5, 2018.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> China Power Project, "Where is China Targeting its Development Finance?" Center for Strategic Studies, (accessed February 1, 2019)

<https://chinapower.csis.org/china-development-finance/> (accessed February 1, 2019)

<sup>5</sup> Lifan Li, "Energy Security and Energy Risk Management," *Journal of International Affairs* 69, No. 1 (Fall/Winter, 2015): 86.

<sup>6</sup> U.S. Energy Information Administration, "China," *EIA Report*, Last Updated May 14, 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Edward McBride, "A Ravenous Dragon," *The Economist*, March 13, 2008.

<https://www.economist.com/special-report/2008/03/13/a-ravenous-dragon>

<sup>8</sup> China Power Project, "Is China the World's Top Trader?" *Chinapower.csis.org*, 2014. Accessed February 17, 2019. <https://chinapower.csis.org/trade-partner/>

<sup>9</sup> David Dollar, *China Global Investment Tracker*, Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 2018.

<http://www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/>

<sup>10</sup> Courtney Rickert McCaffrey, "How Chinese FDI Will Transform the Global Economy," *The Diplomat*, December 16, 2017. <https://thediplomat.com/2017/12/how-chinese-fdi-will-transform-the-global-economy/>

<sup>11</sup> David Dollar, *China Global Investment Tracker*, Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 2018.

<http://www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/>

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Isabel Flores, *Dissecting Chinese Involvement in Road Construction Projects in Tanzania*, (University of Iowa, Honors thesis, 2017). 32.

<sup>14</sup> David Dollar, *China Global Investment Tracker*, Washington, DC: American Enterprise Institute, 2018.

<http://www.aei.org/china-global-investment-tracker/>

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> World Bank, "China 1990-2017," *World Integrated Trade Solution*, Accessed: March 20, 2019,

<https://wits.worldbank.org/CountryProfile/en/Country/SSF/StartYear/1990/EndYear/2017/TradeFlow/Export/Indicator/XPRT-TRD-VL/Partner/CHN/Product/all-groups#>

<sup>21</sup> Xinhua, "Roundup: China, Africa to Enhance Cooperation, Affirm Support at FOCAC Beijing Summit," *Xinhua News*, August 30, 2018. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-08/30/c\\_137431649.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2018-08/30/c_137431649.htm)

<sup>22</sup> China News Daily, "习近平主席提出“一带一路”倡议 5 周年：构建人类命运共同体的伟大实践[Xi Jinping's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the 'Belt and Road' Initiative: The Great Task of Constructing the Communal Way Forward]," Accessed April 25, 2019, [http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-10/05/content\\_5327979.htm](http://www.gov.cn/xinwen/2018-10/05/content_5327979.htm)

## Chapter IV. Targeted Peacekeeping Contributions

From 1971, when the People's Republic of China took over China's position on the UN Security Council, to now, China's relationship to the UN has shifted significantly. From contentious opposition and near dormant activity, China is now not only an active member in the UN, but seeking greater influence within the body.<sup>1</sup> One of the most visible ways that China has begun to increase its influence is through increased troop contributions to UN peacekeeping operations. Now the tenth largest troop contributor overall, and the largest troop contributor among the Permanent Five, China has over 2,500 troops deployed across eight missions.<sup>2</sup> Though France has long dominated the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations leadership, in 2016 *Foreign Policy* magazine reported that China was actively seeking leadership positions, in what Richard Gowan described as "the first phase of a Chinese bid to, firstly, assert itself over UN peacekeeping and, secondly, rewrite the rules of UN peacekeeping."<sup>3</sup> Though this particular bid was unsuccessful, China's vocal commitment to reforming global governance holds that as China's troop contributions and support of UN peacekeeping remain high and potentially increase. In line with China's greater ambitions of rewriting international norms to suit its interests, China's contributions to peacekeeping have been highly strategic aimed at supporting and securing strategic interests abroad.

Though garnering international clout is within China's strategic interest, the targeted contributions China makes to peacekeeping operations suggest more direct strategic goals and interests influence China's peacekeeping contribution decisions. These include, but are not limited to, tangible and intangible military, political, and economic benefits. If China only sought to gain influence it would likely increase contributions across all missions, rather than concentrating increases in certain locations, in order to maximize China's global exposure. While

China has been a member of the UN for almost fifty years, most of China's peacekeeping contributions have been concentrated in the past ten to thirty years and have not been evenly distributed across all UN peacekeeping missions. Since 1990, China has contributed over 36,000 peacekeeping personnel, across 24 separate UN peacekeeping missions.<sup>4</sup> A majority of those troops have been concentrated to only a third of the missions to which it has contributed.<sup>5</sup>

Across time and location China's troop contribution increases have been targeted. For instance, in 1992, China contributed over 400 troops to the UN mission in Cambodia (UNTAC), dwarfing China's contributions to the three other missions it was contributing to at the time.<sup>6</sup> Then again in 2003, after a lull in peacekeeping contributions, China sent 228 engineering and logistical troops to the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo which again made up a bulk of China's overall contributions at the time.<sup>7</sup> As of December 2018, over 40 percent of China's troop contributions (1,067 of the total 2,515 troops) are concentrated in one mission: the UN mission in South Sudan.<sup>8</sup> The decision to increase troop contributions or to send infantry troops on top of existing engineering, medical and logistical troops to specific locations at a particular time suggests a strategic calculation underscoring China's peacekeeping contribution decision-making.

From China's early engagement until now, China has moved from outright objection to peacekeeping operations to active engagement in response to strategic concerns. Before 1981, China abstained from voting on UN peacekeeping resolutions, and refused to contribute troops or funds believing the UN to be a tool for US dominance.<sup>9</sup> Though it began to contribute funds in 1982, it still abstained from voting for another decade until 1991 when Cambodia, a long political ally, signed a comprehensive peace deal and invited in the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) to which China contributed troops.<sup>10</sup> Again lulling into a period of less

active participation following UNTAC, China's participation increases has followed similar patterns since.

China has elected to shift its peacekeeping contribution habits, sending larger troop contingents, and different types of troops when and where its strategic interests have the most to gain. In this way, China's increased involvement has not been linear. Rather, China's peacekeeping contributions to UN peacekeeping contributions are the result of a series of targeted strategic decisions. Highlighting China's historical relationship to UN peacekeeping, the drastic increase in China's overall peacekeeping contributions, and the types of troops they contribute, I assert that China's increased engagement with UN peacekeeping operations been targeted and strategically motivated by economic interests.

## **Background**

Originally China was highly critical of the UN and UN mandated operations. In February 1951, following China's Yalu river offensive, the UN General Assembly adopted resolution 498 labeling China the aggressor in the Korean War, condemning the Chinese, and calling for continued action "to meet [Chinese] aggression".<sup>11</sup> Labeled the "aggressor" in their first interaction with UN forces (which were led by US forces), Beijing thereafter viewed all UN interventions as being run by and for the US.<sup>12</sup> When the Sino-Soviet relationship collapsed in the mid-1960s, China's condemnation of the UN grew beyond condemnation of the United States' interactions with the body, condemning the Soviet Union's role in the UN as well.<sup>13</sup> China viewed the UN as an arena for the United States and Soviet Union Cold War battles for influence.<sup>14</sup> In 1965 China's Foreign Minister, Chen Yi stated at a press conference that "the United Nations has long been controlled by the United States and has today become a place

where two big powers, the United States and the Soviet Union, conduct political transactions.”<sup>15</sup> That same year a government publication condemned the General Assembly’s establishment of the Special Committee for Peacekeeping Operations as a plot by the US to “convert the United Nations into a US-controlled headquarters of international gendarmes to suppress and stamp out the revolutionary struggles of the world’s people.”<sup>16</sup>

After the People’s Republic of China became a permanent member of the UN Security Council in 1971, it adopted a slightly less contentious approach to the UN. Still guided by the distrust of Western powers as they were before being admitted into the UN, China vocally opposed the creation and continuation of peacekeeping operations, refusing to contribute personnel or pay the required peacekeeping dues.<sup>17</sup> China, however, did not use its veto power to kill UN Security Council Resolutions regarding peacekeeping operations.<sup>18</sup> Instead, China opted to abstain from all UN Security Council voting.<sup>19</sup> Employing what has been referred to as a “fifth voting style,” Chinese representatives were present but did not participate in any UN Security Council votes, unless they involved Taiwan.<sup>20</sup>

Then, in 1981, China voted in favor of UN Security Council Resolution 495 authorizing the extension of the UN mission in Cyprus (UNFICYP).<sup>21</sup> China’s representative at the time declared that “from now on, the Chinese government will actively consider and support such UN peacekeeping operations as are conducive to the maintenance of international peace and security and to the preservation of the sovereignty and independence of the states concerned in strict conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter.”<sup>22</sup> The following year, at the 12<sup>th</sup> National Congress of the Communist Party of China, Chinese leadership introduced the “independent foreign policy of peace” (独立自主的和平外交政策), which abandoned China’s ideological disagreements with the West and stated that China sought peaceful coexistence.<sup>23</sup>

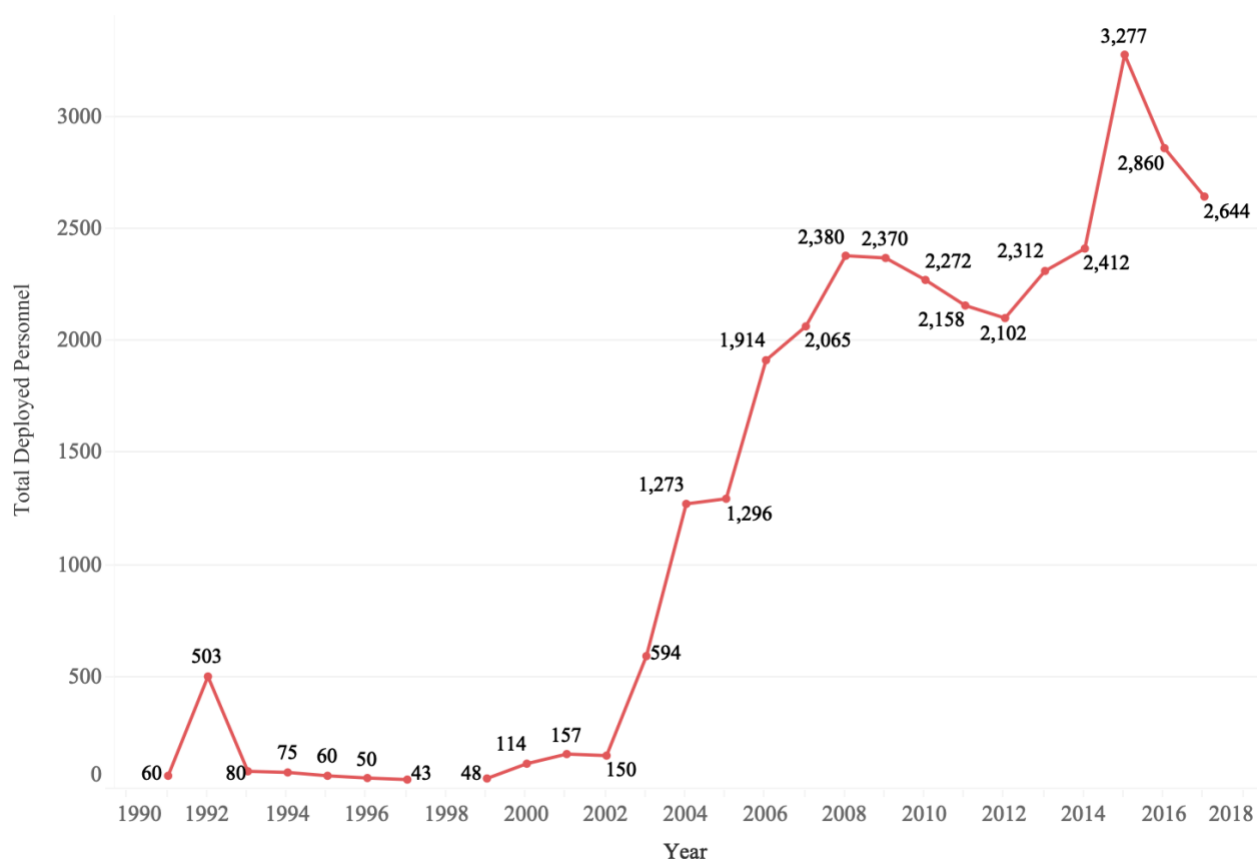


According to Xia Liping there are two outstanding aspects of the independent foreign policy for peace. First, the usage of “peace” (和平) indicates that Chinese foreign policy is now concerned with whether or not a move is beneficial to international and regional peace.<sup>24</sup> And secondly, that the usage of “independent” (独立自主) indicates that it makes the calculus based on Chinese interests.<sup>25</sup> China would engage with international peace and security on China’s terms. When China began to contribute its first troops to the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in the Middle East, the “independent” aspect of China’s “independent foreign policy of peace” began to appear more clearly. Specifically, China’s strategic interests began to dictate when, where, and how many troops China sent to UN peacekeeping operations.

### **Contributions Over Time**

Over time, China’s UN peacekeeping contributions have expanded. China is now a leading UN peacekeeping contributor. When China first contributed troops to the UN in 1990, it sent five military observers to the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) in the Middle East. As of December 2018, China has 18 police, 30 UN military experts, 48 staff officers, and 2,419 troops deployed across eight missions.<sup>26</sup> China’s peacekeeping contributions increased forty-fold over the span of twenty-seven years (see Figure 5). This shift took off in 2003 when Hu Jintao took over as president (See Figure 5). In line with his “go out” push, China’s contributions to UN peacekeeping operations during this period were expansive. Since Xi Jinping came to the presidency, he has continued the upward trend and further shifted China’s approach to UN peacekeeping operations establishing an 8,000 strong UN peacekeeping reserve force and deploying infantry battalions to both Mali and South Sudan.

Figure 5: Year End Chinese UN Peacekeeping Contributions 1991-2017



(United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, 1990-2018)

China's contribution increases have not, however, been continuous. From 1991 to 2002, China's troop contributions remained relatively low, apart from a spike in contributions to the UN mission in Cambodia in 1992 (see Figure 5). It was not until around 2003 that China's contributions began to increase significantly. From 150 personnel at the end of 2002, to 594 in 2003, 1273 in 2004, 1296 in 2005, 1914 in 2006, 2065 in 2007, and 2380 at the end of 2008. Plateauing for a time, Chinese peacekeeping contributions stayed roughly around the 2000 personnel mark until 2015. China also went from contributing to five missions at the start of 2003, to nine by end of 2014 (see Figure 6). Then again in 2015, China's troop contributions

increased when China sent its first combat troops to the UN mission in Mali, and its first infantry battalion to the UN mission in South Sudan. From 2014 to 2016, China's peacekeeping contributions increased by around 30 percent. Since 2016, China's troop contributions have decreased, though this is not so much a strategic decision as it is the result of the UN mission in Liberia (UNMIL) coming to an end in 2018.<sup>27</sup>

Over time, China has also expanded the number of missions to which it has contributed. These contributions, similar to China's contribution increases over time, have also not been evenly distributed. Since 1991, China has contributed personnel to twenty-four separate missions, across twenty-three countries (see Figure 6). In 1991, China contributed to four UN missions across three regions (Middle East, North Africa, South East Asia). In 2016, at the height of China's total peacekeeping contributions to date, it was contributing to ten separate missions across four regions (Middle East, North Africa, Sub-Saharan Africa, Europe). Overall, of the twenty-four separate missions China has contributed to, only nine have received over 100 Chinese personnel at any one point; the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), the United Nations Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH), United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), United Nations Mission in Darfur (UNMID), United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS), and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali (MINUSMA). China's contributions to these missions largely constitute the variance in China's troop contributions over time. Given the size of the deployments to these missions, the shifts in Chinese peacekeeping contribution decision-making is greatly linked to the conditions in these mission locations.

Figure 6: China's Mission Contributions 1991-Present

Acronym	Mission Name	Location	Contribution Start Date	Contribution End Date
UNTSO	United Nations Truce Supervision Organization	Middle East	March 1991	Present
UNIKOM	United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observer Mission	Iraq; Kuwait	April 1991	May 2003
MINURSO	United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara	Morocco (Western Sahara)	September 1991	Present
UNAMIC → UNTAC (1992)	United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia	Cambodia	November 1991	January 1992 (Became UNTAC in 1992)
UNTAC*	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia	Cambodia	February 1992	October 1993
ONUMOZ	United Nations Operation in Mozambique	Mozambique	August 1993	December 1994
UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia	Liberia	October 1993	July 1997
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone	Sierra Leone	August 1998	November 2008
UNTAET	United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor	Timor-Leste (previously Indonesia)	January 2000	November 2012
UNMEE	United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea	Ethiopia; Eritrea	October 2000	July 2008
UNMIBH	United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina	Bosnia-Herzegovina	January 2001	November 2002
MONUC* → MONUSCO (2010)	United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	The Democratic Republic of the Congo	April 2001	June 2010 (Became MONUSCO in 2010)
UNMIL*	United Nations Mission in Liberia	Liberia	October 2003	January 2018
UNAMA	United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan	Afghanistan	January 2004	May 2006
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire	Côte d'Ivoire	March 2004	January 2017
UNMIK	United Nations Mission in Kosovo	Kosovo (Serbia)	April 2004	December 2008
MINUSTAH*	United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti	Haiti	June 2004	October 2012
ONUB	United Nations Operation in Burundi	Burundi	July 2004	June 2006
UNMIS* → UNMISS (2011)	United Nations Mission in Sudan	Former Sudan (Sudan before South Sudan independence)	May 2005	July 2011 (Became UNMISS in 2011)
UNIFIL*	United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon	Lebanon	March 2006	Present
UNMID*	United Nations Mission in Darfur	Sudan (Darfur)	December 2007	Present
MONUSCO*	United Nations Stabilization	The Democratic	July 2010	Present

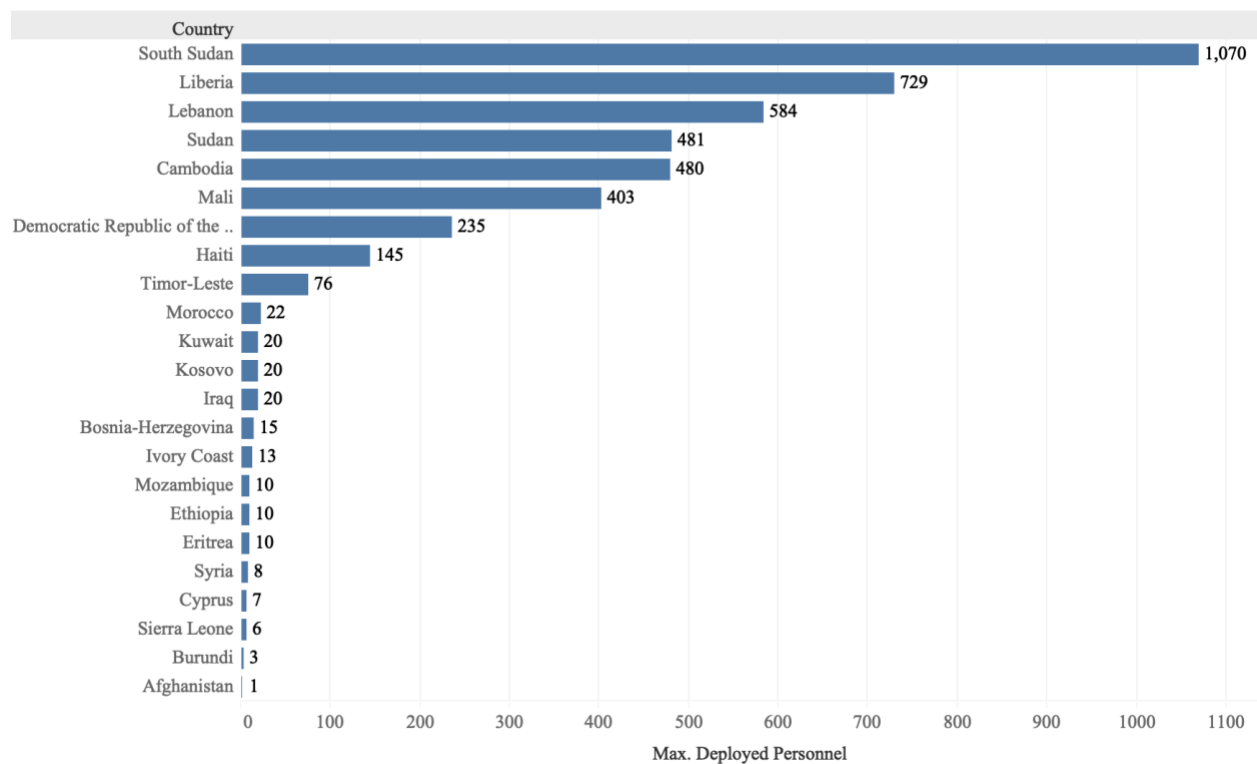
	Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo	Republic of the Congo		
UNFICYP	United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus	Cyprus	February 2011	Present
UNMISS*	United Nations Mission in South Sudan	South Sudan	August 2011	Present
UNISFA	United Nations Interim Security Force for Abyei	Sudan/South Sudan (Contested)	October 2011	October 2011
UNSMIS	United Nations Mission in Syria	Syria	April 2012	July 2012
MINUSMA*	United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali	Mali	October 2013	Present

\* Mission where China has deployed 100 troops or more

(United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, 1990-2018)

The UN allows countries to decide where, how many, and what types of troops a country sends to a UN peacekeeping operation.<sup>28</sup> This means that a contributing country can control its engagement. The United States for instance, largely sends staff officers, military observers, or mission experts and in relatively small numbers.<sup>29</sup> China on the other hand has increasingly sent more peacekeepers, often to the nine missions mentioned above. The size of China's troop contributions varies greatly among missions. At the moment, for example, China has more peacekeeping troops in South Sudan than in the next two largest mission locations combined.<sup>30</sup> China's deployments to UNMISS currently constitute around 42 percent of their overall troop contributions.<sup>31</sup> While it is difficult to ascertain how many troops China has sent in total over time (given each month's report is not to be summed, but is a description of the strength that particular month), highlighting the maximum number of troops China has sent to a given mission at any one time, reveals that even among the nine missions China has sent over 100 personnel to at any one given time, there is a great deal of variance as well (see Figure 7). This variance signals Chinese preference for certain missions over others, making these missions important to understanding the conditions which motivate China to contribute.

Figure 7: Chinese Troop Contribution Max by Country



(United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, 1990-2018)

While China's peacekeeping contributions have increased overall, they have not been continuous nor even. Rather, China's troop contributions have increased in a targeted manner, varying by time and mission. This targeted nature signals that China's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations are influenced by strategic interests beyond cultivating influence. In order to understand how and why China's relationship to UN peacekeeping has shifted over time, it is necessary to understand when and where China has chosen to shift its approach. Specifically, it is necessary to understand when and where these targeted increases occur to determine the underlying motivating factors that drive China's troop contribution increases.

## **Strategic Shifts**

China's approach to UN peacekeeping operations has shifted over time considerably. These shifts have occurred as a result of strategic concerns related to certain mission locations. Increasingly, as China's global power has continued to grow, and its strategic interests abroad expand, China has found it increasingly necessary to engage more with UN peacekeeping operations in support of its strategic interests abroad. Increasingly, China's large peacekeeping deployments have been influenced by growing economic interests abroad. Central to China's grand strategy and global rise, China's economic interest hold significant sway over China's political leadership. It is therefore not entirely surprising that China's economic considerations have become more influential towards determining China's peacekeeping contributions.

## *Contributions*

China's first large contribution to UN peacekeeping was to the UN mission in Cambodia. In 1992 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 745 authorizing the UN mission in Cambodia (UNTAC).<sup>32</sup> The mission would be short, no longer than eighteen months, and would ideally hold elections by May 1993.<sup>33</sup> China agreed to support the mission both financially and politically, sending two People's Liberation Army engineering units.<sup>34</sup> In June of 1993, China had 480 deployed engineering troops in Cambodia.<sup>35</sup> Supporting a mission, whose mandate granted great transitional authority, with such large troop contributions in itself marks both a significant shift towards larger troop contributions, as well as an increasing flexibility towards its own normative principles of sovereignty and noninterference.<sup>36</sup> It was also the first time China had sent more than ten troops to any one mission.

A regional ally, and strategic partner, China had long been concerned with Cambodia's

security. Home to a large Chinese ethnic minority, who had been oppressed during the 1980s after the deposition of the Khmer Rouge, and an ideological partner when Mao was alive, China aimed to facilitate a peaceful post-conflict Cambodia realigned with Beijing.<sup>37</sup> After Vietnam invaded Cambodia and disposed of the China-friendly Khmer Rouge, the Chinese continued to support the ideologically aligned group until the Agreements on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict were signed in 1991.<sup>38</sup> A signatory member, China found it beneficial to put an end to the conflict and see a peaceful post-conflict Cambodia. After sending troops in 1992, China's Foreign Minister Qian Qichen expressed greater support for UN peacekeeping operations stating that China "support[s] the United Nations in its positive efforts to avoid an escalation of conflicts and seek peaceful settlements. Outside intervention and mediation can be resorted to when necessary, provided that they are based on a strict observance of the principles and objectives of the United Nations Charter and the basic norms of international law."<sup>39</sup>

While China's contributions to UNTAC represented a momentary shift, China did not contribute large peacekeeping forces across a number of missions until later, when other strategic concerns began to arise. Increasingly, as China has become economically entangled in more areas, security concerns for its economic interests have become a motivating factor for China's peacekeeping contributions. Beginning in the early 2000s, some ten years after Deng Xiaoping's "Go Out" policy, China's economic interests began to interact with political instability. After Cambodia, the UN mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) became the second mission to receive over 100 Chinese troops, a few years after Chinese nationals had begun to enter the DRC's resource rich Katanga province.<sup>40</sup> Soon thereafter, China's contributions began to increase rapidly, in many cases in conjunction with economic concerns.



Famously, in 2007, China successfully used its strong relationship with the Sudanese government to convince Khartoum to allow in the UN mission in Darfur to stabilize the region while peace talks continued.<sup>41</sup> Following at least three separate Darfuri rebel attacks on Chinese oil fields, China was drawn deeper into the situation in Darfur.<sup>42</sup> In response to one attack in October 2008, after China had convinced Khartoum to allow the UN in and China began contributing troops to UNMID, a Darfur rebel official expressly stated that Chinese oil workers were a target, telling a Reuters reporter, “We carried out operations in the oil regions before and warned the firms and individuals that whoever is there is considered a legitimate military target.”<sup>43</sup> Though China’s oil profits at the time were seemingly unaffected, the threat of continued oil field targeting played a definite role in China’s negotiations with Khartoum, and its subsequent peacekeeping deployments.<sup>44</sup>

In 2014, China shifted its approach to UN peacekeeping contributions again in response to concerns over the security of its economic interests. On September 9, 2014 China began deploying some 700 soldiers to the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS).<sup>45</sup> According to the Wall Street Journal, these troops were sent to protect imperiled civilians and oil field workers.<sup>46</sup> Under an extended mandate that expressly denounces targeting of oil field infrastructure and workers, and calls for the protection of both, China sent its largest peacekeeping contingent yet. Equipped with drones, armored carriers, antitank missiles, mortars and other weapons, this was also China’s first infantry battalion.<sup>47</sup> China moved beyond engineering, medical, and logistical battalions, China now sent soldiers. This most recent shift, represents the most pronounced example of China’s strategic economic concerns.

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- <sup>2</sup> December 2018 data. UN Peacekeeping, "Summary of Troop Contributing Countries by Ranking," Accessible at <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>
- <sup>3</sup> Quote from Richard Gowan from Collum Lynch, "China Eyes Ending Western Grip on Top UN Jobs With Greater Control Over Blue Helmets," *Foreign Policy Magazine*, October 2, 2016. <https://foreignpolicy.com/2016/10/02/china-eyes-ending-western-grip-on-top-u-n-jobs-with-greater-control-over-blue-helmets/>
- <sup>4</sup> Xinhua, "China Finishes Training of UN peacekeeping Staff Officers," *Xinhua News*, August 12, 2018. [http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/08/c\\_136811653.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/english/2017-12/08/c_136811653.htm)
- <sup>5</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>6</sup> Author's dataset based on data from the UN Peacekeeping database, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>
- <sup>7</sup> Author's dataset based on data from the UN Peacekeeping database, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>
- <sup>8</sup> Author's dataset based on data from the UN Peacekeeping database, <https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/troop-and-police-contributors>
- <sup>9</sup> Courtney Fung, "China's Troop Contributions to UN Peacekeeping," *United States Institute of Peace Peacebrief* (July 2016): 1
- <sup>10</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Financing of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia*, UN General Assembly Resolution 47/209. December 22, 1992.
- <sup>11</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Intervention of the Central People's Government of the People's Republic of China in Korea*, United Nations General Assembly Resolution 498 (V).
- <sup>12</sup> Wu Zhengyu; Ian Taylor, "From Refusal to Engagement: Chinese Contributions to Peacekeeping in Africa," *Journal of Contemporary African Studies* 29, No. 2. 140.
- <sup>13</sup> International Crisis Group, "China's Growing Role in UN Peacekeeping," *Crisis Group Asia Report* No. 166, April 17, 2009, 3.
- <sup>14</sup> Ibid, 3.
- <sup>15</sup> *Peiking Review*, No. 3 (1965): 11-12.
- <sup>16</sup> *Peiking Review*, No. 10 (1965): 15.
- <sup>17</sup> International Crisis Group, "China's Growing Role in UN Peacekeeping," *Crisis Group Asia Report* No. 166, April 17, 2009, 4
- <sup>18</sup> Ibid, 4.
- <sup>19</sup> Yin He, "China's Changing Policy on UN Peacekeeping Operations," *Asia Paper* series (Stockholm: Institute for Security and Development Policy, 2007), 17.
- <sup>20</sup> China News Week, "中国重返联合国之初[The Early Days after China's Return to the United Nations]," September 19, 2005. Available at <http://news.sina.com.cn/w/2005-09-15/10327774643.shtml>
- <sup>21</sup> United Nations Security Council, *United Nations Security Council Resolution 495* (1981).
- <sup>22</sup> UN Doc. S/PV .2313, December 14, 1981.
- <sup>23</sup> Communist Party of China, *Independent Foreign Policy of Peace* [独立自主的和平外交政策] ; Yin He, "China's Changing Policy on UN Peacekeeping Operations," *Asia Paper* series (Stockholm: Institute for Security and Development Policy, 2007). 22
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- <sup>25</sup> Ibid, 18.
- <sup>26</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations, *Contributors to UN Peacekeeping Operations by Country and Post*, December 31, 2018. [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/1\\_summary\\_of\\_contributions\\_12.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/1_summary_of_contributions_12.pdf)
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- <sup>29</sup> Data from December 31, 2018. UN Peacekeeping, "Summary of Troop Contributing Countries by Ranking," [https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/2\\_country\\_ranking\\_6.pdf](https://peacekeeping.un.org/sites/default/files/2_country_ranking_6.pdf);
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>31</sup> Ibid.

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- <sup>32</sup> United Nations Security Council. *United Nations Security Council Resolution 745*, 1992, 39-40.
- <sup>33</sup> United Nations General Assembly, *Financing of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia*, UN General Assembly Resolution 47/209. December 22, 1992, 2.
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- <sup>39</sup> Qian Qichen, *Remarks at the Forty-Seventh Session of the United Nations General Assembly*, The United Nations General Assembly, September 23, 1992, 42.
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- <sup>43</sup> Andrew Heavens; Alaa Shahine, "UPDATE 5 - Nine Chinese Oil Workers Kidnapped in Sudan," *Reuters*, October 19, 2008. <https://uk.reuters.com/article/sudan-kidnap/update-5-nine-chinese-oil-workers-kidnapped-in-sudan-idUKLJ4350220081019>
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- <sup>45</sup> Nicholas Bariyo, "Chin Deploys Troops to South Sudan to Defend Oil Fields, Workers," *Wall Street Journal*, September 9, 2014.
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## Chapter V. Resources, Markets, and Peacekeeping

Since China's initial forays into economic liberalization, China's need for raw materials has been a significant concern for the continuation of China's economic growth. Oil, in particular, became a dire concern early in China's rise following declines in domestic production.<sup>1</sup> In 1993, Chinese oil consumption overtook stagnating domestic production, pushing China out in search of more.<sup>2</sup> A late comer to foreign oil extraction, China's newly formed state-run China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) and other commercial oil seeking entities did not have the luxury of going after "low-hanging fruit", and were forced to seek out petroleum resources in areas that had been deemed unfavorable by other companies.<sup>3</sup> Many of these "unfavorable" locations were unfavorable due to political instability, such as Sudan, Niger, and Indonesia.<sup>4</sup> The same is true of China's other resource needs including copper, cobalt, iron, and gold, which have led it into environments such as the DRC, Liberia, and Mali.<sup>5</sup>

Forced into unstable climates in search of resources, China has had to cope with the implications of investing in these types of environments. Sovereignty and non-interference remain central to Chinese foreign policy, making China's options for securing their economic assets abroad particularly narrow. China must preserve its economic interests abroad in politically unstable environments without presenting as interventionist. As a result, China has strategically committed Chinese troops to UN peacekeeping operations in economically important locations, for the preservation of key economic interests. Under UN mandate, peacekeeping operations require host state consent for deployment, making Chinese contributions a non-interventionist approach to peace and security in line with Chinese foreign policy principles.<sup>6</sup>

Increasingly, China's large-scale deployments have been concentrated in Africa and in locations of economic importance to China. Made on a country-by-country basis, China can pick and choose where it sends peacekeeping contributions, and what kinds of troops it sends to those missions.<sup>7</sup> Accordingly, where China has greater economic interests (in the form of construction contract revenues, FDI, and trade) among the existing UN peacekeeping missions, China has also sent larger peacekeeping contingents to those countries. Specifically, China has sent more peacekeepers to locations either to secure resources or to a lesser degree to facilitate greater diplomatic relations to establish export trade markets.

Underscoring the resource-oriented nature of many of China's investments across Africa, I assess China's strategic economic considerations in their peacekeeping contributions. China's peacekeeping contributions in Africa are first and foremost concerned with protecting its access to resources, and to a lesser degree its access to export markets for its goods. I then employ a case study of China's interactions with the UN mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) to further illustrate China's raw material extraction and its impact on China's peacekeeping considerations. The location of China's National Petroleum Corporation's (CNPC) first international oil extraction operation and the location of China's largest peacekeeping deployment to date, South Sudan presents a particularly pertinent example of China's targeted shift towards greater troop contributions.

## **Resources and Markets**

Alongside large increases in FDI, construction contracts, and trade linked to resource extraction, China has increasingly become intertwined with the African continent, and by default African conflict. Focused on resource securitization through infrastructure support, civilian

worker protection, or overall support for a more secure environment that does not jeopardize its interests China's peacekeeping contributions have paralleled China's growing appetite for raw materials and energy resources.<sup>8</sup> Particularly concerned with resource extraction, and to a lesser degree establishing favorable environments for export markets, China's peacekeeping contributions show remarkable parallels to China's outward FDI flows and trade relationships overall, and prove to be concerned centrally with the preservation or furthering of Chinese economic interests.

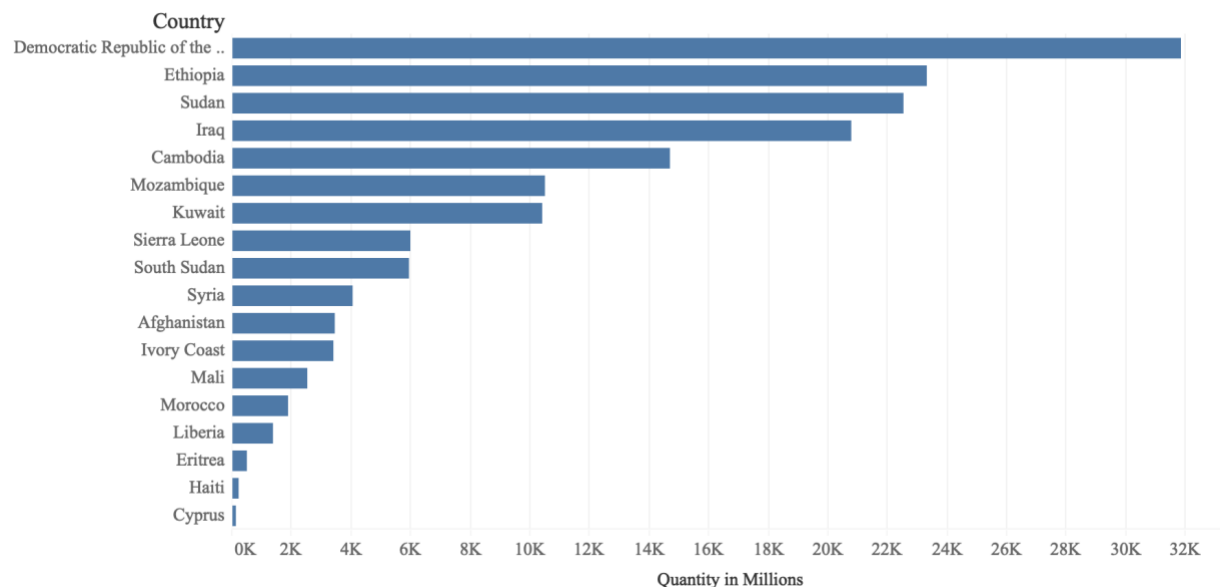
### *Resources*

The places where China has had large FDI, more construction contracts, and import trade from sub-Saharan Africa, it has also had a greater incentive to send peacekeepers to support resource-oriented economic interests. Some of the more noticeable examples of China's peacekeeping contributions deployed in support of Chinese resource assets are represented by the high levels of Chinese FDI, trade, and construction contracts and large peacekeeping parallels across Sudan, South Sudan, and the DRC. Not only are Sudan, South Sudan, and the DRC, home to large oil reserves, copper and cobalt deposits, they are also home to some of China's largest peacekeeping contributions. Though these troops are not always directly sent to protect Chinese resource extraction operations, China sends large troop contingents which include engineering battalions which can repair transportation routes which aid China's resource transportation, or large infantry battalions to safeguard civilians. For instance, in the DRC, China's engineering battalion is stationed in South Kivu where much of China's mining operations take place, and often helps repair roads and other infrastructure in the region.<sup>9</sup>

Taking into consideration all of the missions to which China has contributed peacekeepers,

China's preference for countries where it has established economic interests is visible. In particular, where China has established economic interests which favor its resource needs, it has also sent more peacekeepers. For instance, of the locations where China has sent peacekeepers, China has the greatest outward FDI flows to the DRC, Ethiopia (which concluded its mission before much of the FDI flows began), Sudan, and Iraq (which also concluded its mission before much of the flows began) (see Figure 8). Both Sudan and the DRC have been home to some of China's largest peacekeeping contributions. Given the concentration of China's FDI in Sub-Saharan Africa in energy and transportation sectors which favor Chinese resource extraction operations, China's targeted peacekeeping contributions signal resource concerns.

Figure 8: Chinese Foreign Direct Investment and Peacekeeping Contribution Locations 2005-2017

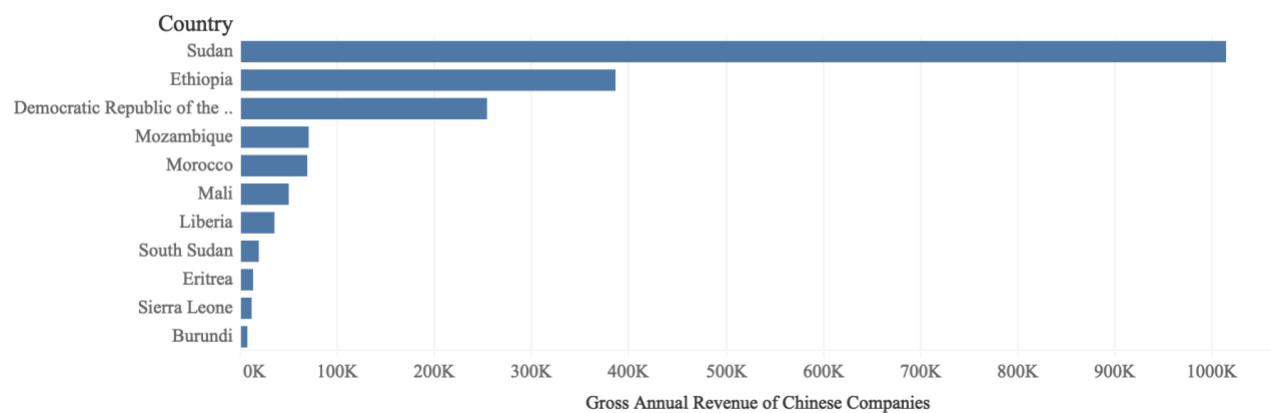


(American Enterprise Institute, *China Global Investment Tracker*, 2018; United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, 1990-2018)

Similarly, China's concentration of troops in locations where China has large construction contracts also elucidate the resource and raw material-based concerns behind China's

peacekeeping contributions. Of the locations where China has sent peacekeepers, two of the locations with the most construction contracts have been the DRC and Sudan (see Figure 9). Both the DRC and Sudan have also been the locations of significant shifts in Chinese peacekeeping contributions. As was the case with Chinese FDI, China's construction contracts across sub-Saharan Africa are centered around Chinese resource extraction operations with a majority focused on energy and transportation construction which directly and indirectly aid Chinese resource interests.

Figure 9: Chinese Construction Contracts in Africa and Peacekeeping Contribution Locations 1992-2016

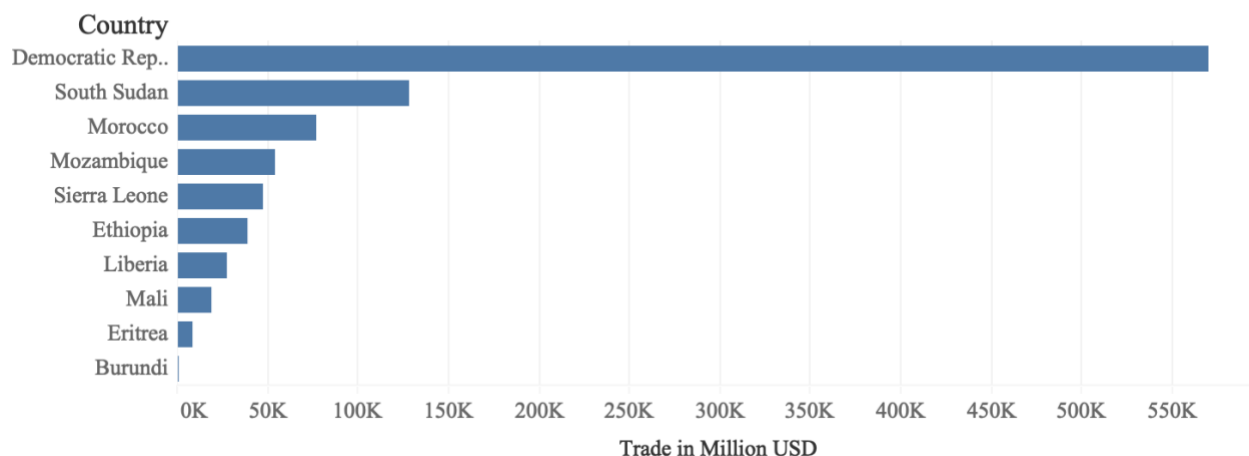


(American Enterprise Institute, *China Global Investment Tracker*, 2018; United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, 1990-2018)

Finally, Chinese imports from sub-Saharan Africa further illustrate China's resource-oriented peacekeeping contributions. The two countries to which China has contributed troops to a UN mission within its borders with the most exports to China are the DRC and South Sudan (see Figure 10). Accordingly, South Sudan, and the DRC have been home to some of China's most historic troop contributions. Dominating Chinese imports from sub-Saharan Africa, raw materials and resources are key components of China's targeted peacekeeping contributions.



Figure 10: China Imports from Africa and Peacekeeping Contribution Locations 1992-2016



(World Bank, 2018; United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, 1990-2018)

China's outward FDI flows, construction contracts, and import trade markets are heavily concerned with China's resource needs. Where China's contributions correspond with these economic interests, the aim is protecting Chinese access to important resources. For instance, China's oil interests in Sudan and South Sudan are fundamental to China's peacekeeping contributions. The China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) has had oil investments in Sudan since 1995 and now holds a majority share in Sudanese oil subsidiary stock ranging from 40 percent in the Greater Nile Petroleum Operating Company (GNPOC), to 95 percent in Petro Energy Operating Company (PEOC).<sup>10</sup> In 2016, China imported 98 percent of Sudanese and South Sudanese oil.<sup>11</sup> Oil has and continues to be in high demand for the Chinese, making Sudan a strategically important location. Due to long bouts of conflict, the split between Sudan and South Sudan, and continued disputes over oil transport and production, China's oil interests in the country have been significantly impacted. Most notably in 2012, South Sudan shut down nearly all of its oil production over a transit fee disputes with Sudan to the north.<sup>12</sup> China's

decision to send large peacekeeping contingents to both the UN mission in Darfur, and the UN mission in Sudan that then became the UN mission in South Sudan, is aligned with its greater resource concerns.

Similarly, China's peacekeeping contributions in the DRC have been significantly influenced by China's copper and cobalt interests in the DRC. In 2008 China and the DRC signed a landmark resource-for-infrastructure deal, solidifying China's hold on Congolese minerals and commitment to a notoriously unstable section of the country.<sup>13</sup> Worth 6 billion USD, China was to invest 3 billion USD in mining and another 3 billion in infrastructure development in the DRC's resource rich Katanga province.<sup>14</sup> The deal was a culmination of China's growing interest in the instable nation. Three years before China sent 228 peacekeepers to the UN mission in the DRC (then called MONUC), Katanga province saw an influx of Chinese nationals interested in gaining access to the DRC's cobalt and copper located in the region.<sup>15</sup>

By 2011, estimates claim that over sixty of Katanga's seventy-five mineral processing plants are owned by Chinese nationals, and that somewhere around 90 percent of the regions minerals go to China.<sup>16</sup> Aside from its rich mineral deposits, Katanga province is also prone to instability.<sup>17</sup> Located just south of where the main rebel movements have been most active (North and South Kivu), and prone to rebellion, the location's mineral wealth has also been a source of conflict.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, China's deployed engineering battalion is stationed in South Kivu province, and periodically helps rebuild roads and local transportation networks vital to Chinese resource transportation.<sup>19</sup> For China to continue its cobalt and copper extraction, protection of its infrastructure projects from instability in the region is key.

Two of the most significant peacekeeping troop deployments China has made have been to both the DRC and Sudan. In 2003, China sent around 228 peacekeeping troops to MONUC,

marking its first large deployment since its involvement in Cambodia. In 2006, China's contributions to the UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS) were the second largest of China's peacekeeping contributions at the time behind Liberia. When combined with China's deployments to the UN mission in Darfur, China's total peacekeeping presence in the country was greater than any other country. With large infrastructure projects underway and a growing or dominant share in both DRC and Sudan's natural resource markets, China responded to conflict in the region based on defending the peace and defending Chinese resources. Alone, China's economic assets represent a driver for Chinese involvement in certain peacekeeping operations. They also, however, signal deeper interests. Much like the rest of Chinese FDI in the region, China's interests are strongly rooted in China's energy and resource security concerns.

### *Export Markets*

On the other hand, China's peacekeeping contributions also serve to facilitate greater export market relationships as well, albeit to a lesser degree. This interaction functions under a different kind of securitization. Whereas China's approach to peacekeeping contributions in the case of import-heavy trade function under a model of securing existing and developing markets, Chinese export-heavy trade reflects concern for securing future markets. This practice is evident in Chinese peacekeeping contribution patterns in relation to the two type of trade relations. Where Chinese exports to the country are greatest, Chinese contributions have also been higher, though the large contributions often predate export trade increases. In contributing troops, China signals its political resolve to peace and security in that region or country, which also opens up the possibility for future economic trade relations between China and the post conflict country.

For instance, in Liberia, China sent troops *before* establishing a large export market with the

country. Through continued political and diplomatic exposure, further legitimized by China's visible support for peace and security in a particular environment, Chinese markets have been able to flourish. At its height, China sent 729 logistical, engineering, and medical troops alongside military observers and police units.<sup>20</sup> China also sent a "generous aid package" to the post-conflict country in 2004.<sup>21</sup> Having successfully incentivized the Liberian government to cut diplomatic ties with Taiwan and recognize the People's Republic of China, China's outlook on UN peacekeeping shifted significantly. As Meicen Sun writes, China realized that UN peacekeeping "could be used strategically to open up new possibilities" for Chinese interests.<sup>22</sup>

One of the possibilities Chinese peacekeeping contributions to UNMIL opened up was Liberia's consumer market potential. Two years after China began deploying troops to the UN mission in Liberia in 2004, Liberian imports from China went from 26.19 million USD in 2003 to 181.81 million USD in 2004.<sup>23</sup> Chinese trade with Liberia has continued to grow, peaking in 2011 at 4.97 billion USD.<sup>24</sup> An article in the *News Newspaper* further noted that the presence of Chinese peacekeepers increases the opportunity for commercial engagement with Liberia.<sup>25</sup> Much like China's relationship to peacekeeping contributions, however, even in Liberia troop contributions were not limited to securing export markets. As China began to send troops to UNMIL, it also began to buy up copper and cobalt mining contracts in the country, fortifying its access to these crucial resources.<sup>26</sup> Though Chinese peacekeepers were not sent directly to establish strong trade relations with Liberia, the resulting trade relationship represents another aspect of China's peacekeeping contributions and economic interests.

### **Case Study: South Sudan**

With long established ties to Sudanese and South Sudanese oil, China has contributed

more troops to South Sudan than anywhere else. At one point in 2015, China was contributing to 1070 troops to UNMISS. When China sent its first infantry battalion to UNMISS in 2014, it became clear that China's peacekeeping contributions here were different. In short, it did so to protect China's oil interests in the world's youngest country.

Sudan was one of the first places the China National Petroleum Company (CNPC) went in search of oil, and remains a strategic oil partner. In September of 1995, then Chinese President Jiang Zemin hosted Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir, promising to push the China-Sudan relationship to new heights.<sup>27</sup> During that same visit, CNPC signed a deal with Sudan granting exploration and development rights to block six, a former section of Chevron's oil concessions along the Darfur-Kordofan border.<sup>28</sup> Soon thereafter, CNPC began acquiring more rights to Sudanese oil fields, acquiring blocks one, two, and four in 1996, and later discovering the Farooj oilfield in blocks three and seven, with reserves of 500 million tons.<sup>29</sup> In 1999 China held a ceremony in celebration of the newly created Muglad oilfield, which could produce up to 7.5 to 10 million tons of crude oil, and began the official start of operations for a pipeline connecting Sudan's south and the port of Sudan.<sup>30</sup> Nearly twenty years later, after having built up the Sudanese and South Sudanese oil industries, China is the largest importer of Sudanese and South Sudanese oil and a majority shareholder in a number of Sudan and South Sudan's leading oil production and refinement subsidiaries.<sup>31</sup> Currently 98 percent of Sudan and South Sudan's oil is exported to China, and Chinese companies including CNPC hold anywhere from 40 percent share to 95 percent share in Sudan and South Sudan's leading oil subsidiaries.<sup>32</sup>

These early investments in Sudanese oil became increasingly important to China as a result of China's increased need for crude oil. In the mid-1990s, as domestic oil production began to stagnate, oil consumption grew and began to outpace production.<sup>33</sup> China's economic reforms

had created a bustling middle class with growing energy needs. This resulted in rapid and extensive growth in Chinese energy consumption. According to the 2018 British Petroleum Statistical Review of World Energy Report, Chinese energy consumption again grew by 3.1 percent, making it the largest growth market for energy for the seventeenth consecutive year.<sup>34</sup> Oil is a major component of China's growing energy needs. Since 1984, Chinese oil demand has risen by 39.8 million barrels of oil per day, at an increase of 67% over the span of 34 years.<sup>35</sup> China surpassed the US, becoming the world's largest crude oil importer by importing 8.4 million barrels of oil per day in 2017.<sup>36</sup> In 2011, when Sudan and South Sudan split, the two countries collectively represented the sixth largest source of Chinese oil imports.<sup>37</sup>

After South Sudan's independence referendum, China's bilateral oil relationship became a complex trilateral relationship rife with tension over the country's main source of income: oil. When South Sudan broke off from the north, it took with it most of the valuable oil deposits striping Sudan of nearly 75 percent of its oil production.<sup>38</sup> Though it took most of the productive oil fields with it when it gained independence, South Sudan still depends on Sudan to refine and transport the oil to international markets.<sup>39</sup> The transit fees Sudan places on South Sudanese oil are a major source of revenue for Sudan, and also a major source of contention between the two states.<sup>40</sup> In January of 2012, South Sudan shut down nearly all of its oil production over transit fee disputes.<sup>41</sup> Moreover, it is important to note that although South Sudan took with it most of the productive oil fields, it did not take all of them. One in particular, the Heglig oil field, located on the border of South Sudan's Upper Unity State and Sudan's South Kordofan state, became a source of contention between the two when in 2012 the South Sudanese army (SPLA) occupied the field, sending the two to a brief war.<sup>42</sup> As oil remains a highly contentious issue in South Sudan and Sudan, rebels have taken to attacking oil fields as simply another war tactic.<sup>43</sup> For

external investors, these attacks pose serious threats.

Situated mainly along disputed border areas, China's oil assets lie within these areas prone to attack. China's first acquisition, block six, located in the Muglad Basin, is situated in Sudan's southern Darfur region.<sup>44</sup> The Heglig, Unity, and Bamboo oil fields of blocks one, two, and four also lie in the Muglad Basin in the disputed Abyei territory.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, China's Qamari fields in blocks three and seven, China's final acquisition, are located in South Sudan's northeast region, near Sudan's Blue Nile state and Ethiopia.<sup>46</sup> All three locations are some of the most contentious regions of continued conflict in both Sudan and South Sudan today, leaving Chinese companies in a precarious place. When conflict broke out in South Sudan on December 15, 2013, CNPC withdrew part of its staff and later reduced its oil staff down to twenty-one workers - the number required to maintain at least minimum oil production at the fields.<sup>47</sup>

### *Peacekeeping*

China's commitments to the UN mission in Sudan (which later became South Sudan) predated South Sudanese independence. However, it was not until after fighting broke out in 2013, jeopardizing China's oil investments, that China decided to increase its peacekeeping contributions and deploy its first large infantry battalion. In 2005 China began sending peacekeepers to what was then the UN mission in Sudan (UNMIS), to oversee the comprehensive peace agreement between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement in the country's south.<sup>48</sup> With an independence referendum scheduled to determine the future of southern Sudan, China kept a steady 350 to 500 troops stationed in country to oversee the peace deal. At the time, China's contributions to the UN mission in Darfur were far more significant. During the peak of the Darfur crisis, China suffered extensive backlash over its political and economic ties to the al-Bashir regime, and eventually pressured

Sudan to allow UN troops into the country to quell tensions in the Darfur region.<sup>49</sup>

When in 2013 the situation in South Sudan began to drastically deteriorate, China stepped up their support for the mission and began sending larger peacekeeping contingents to UNMISS. Their deployment increases were not entirely due to the gravity of South Sudan's unfolding conflict, but rather a response to historic attacks on Chinese oil infrastructure and to safeguard against future attacks. South Sudanese rebels had a habit of attacking foreign oil investments. In February of 1984, South Sudanese rebels attacked Chevron's base camp in Rubkona, killing three, wounding seven, and forcing the American company out of Sudan.<sup>50</sup> When China took over Chevron's oil production operations, the attacks continued. As early as 1999 Chinese oil workers came under attack, with the SPLA kidnapping a multiple Chinese oil workers on a number of occasions.<sup>51</sup> In January 2001, a CNPC oil rig came under attack, resulting in the deaths of dozens of Sudanese soldiers protecting the site.<sup>52</sup> Again in 2008, five Chinese oil workers were killed by Darfuri rebels in Sudan's West.<sup>53</sup> And finally, in 2012, more than twenty Chinese road builders were captured by Sudanese rebels associated with the South Sudanese government in Sudan's South Kordofan state.<sup>54</sup>

Having learned their lesson from previous attacks, China set out to protect its oil workers. After negotiations with the UN, China agreed to send around 700 infantry soldiers to UNMISS to protect Chinese oil infrastructure and their workers.<sup>55</sup> United Nations Security Council Resolution 2155, which extended UNMISS's mandate and solidified China's increased peacekeeping contributions, expressly condemned rebel attacks on South Sudanese oil infrastructure and advocated for the protection of oil installations and their works.<sup>56</sup> Stating that the UN "[expresses] grave concern regarding the threats made to oil installations, petroleum companies and their employees... [urges] all parties to ensure the security of economic



infrastructure,” as a part of UNMISS’s mandate extension.<sup>57</sup>

This mission featured China’s first peacekeeping infantry battalion. Equipped with a mandate to fire in protection of civilians and oil infrastructure, China’s decision to send active combat troops for the first time was a shift in China’s peacekeeping contribution approach. UNMISS’s extensive mandate also represents China’s flexibility and ability to adapt when its economic interests are at risk. To Chinese chagrin, this flexibility has also come at a price. When fighting again broke out in 2016, Chinese peacekeepers were caught in the crossfire, leaving two dead and three wounded.<sup>58</sup> In conjunction with the death of another peacekeeper stationed in Mali, debate arose as to whether or not Chinese peacekeeping contributions were worth it.<sup>59</sup> China’s continued support for UNMISS suggests that at least the Chinese Communist Party and Xi Jinping believe so.

## **Conclusion**

China’s contributions to UN peacekeeping operations are not equal. China’s contributions reflect China’s increasing concern over global economic interests. Increasingly, China has sent more peacekeepers to missions in Africa than anywhere else. Whereas in January of 2001 three of the seven missions China contributed to were located in Africa, now five of the seven missions China contributes to are located in Africa.<sup>60</sup> Their contributions to UN missions in Africa have also been some of their largest. All of the missions China currently contributes to in Africa have over 200 personnel stationed in country, with South Sudan topping the list at 1067 deployed Chinese peacekeepers. Over half of the UN peacekeeping missions China has historically contributed to have also been located across the African continent.

The location of a number of key Chinese resource extraction operations and growing trade relationships, China’s peacekeeping deployments across the African continent represent the core

dynamics of China's relationship with peacekeeping contributions. China's continued economic growth and prosperity are a key element not only of China's global rise, but of China's overall stability. Concerned primarily with regime stability and security and expanding its global influence through peaceful and benevolent means, China's economics are the heart of Chinese foreign policy. Safeguarding its economic interests abroad supports China's overall foreign policy goals, and national grand strategy. As Barry Posen asserts, grand strategy must also "identify likely threats to the state's security and it must devise political, economic, military, and other remedies for those threats."<sup>61</sup> One of the ways that China has chosen to mitigate the threat of instability with regards to its economic interests is through troop contributions to the UN.

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<sup>1</sup> William J. Norris, "China's Search for Energy Security," in *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control* 69-89 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 70.

<sup>2</sup> Luke Patey, "Oil for the Party," in *The New Kings of Crude: China, India, and the Global Struggle for Oil in Sudan and South Sudan* (London: Hurst & Company, 2014), 87.

<sup>3</sup> William J. Norris, "China's Search for Energy Security," in *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control* 69-89 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 76-77

<sup>4</sup> CNPC, "CNPC Worldwide," [cnpc.com.cn https://www.cnpc.com.cn/en/cnpcworldwide/cnpcworldwide.shtml](https://www.cnpc.com.cn/en/cnpcworldwide/cnpcworldwide.shtml) (accessed February 1, 2019)

<sup>5</sup> Niall Duggan, "China's New Intervention Policy: China's Peacekeeping Mission to Mali," in *China and Africa: Building Peace and Security Cooperation on the Continent*, Edited by Chris Alden, Abiodun Alao, Zhang Chun, and Laura Barber (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 214; Claude Kabemba, "China-Democratic Republic of Congo Relations: From a Beneficial to a Developmental Cooperation," *African Studies Quarterly* 16, no. 3-4 (2016), 77 ; Fanie Herman "China's PKO in Liberia (UNMIL)," in *China's African Peacekeeping Decision Making in Hu Jintao's Era*, (New Delhi: Vij Books, 2015), 106.

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Department of Peacekeeping, "Forming a New Operation," [peacekeeping.org.un https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/forming-new-operation](https://peacekeeping.un.org/en/forming-new-operation) (accessed February 1, 2019)

<sup>7</sup> Ibid.

<sup>8</sup> Eleanor Albert, "China in Africa," *Council on Foreign Relations* blog, July 12, 2017. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/china-africa>

<sup>9</sup> Fanie Herman "China's PKO in the DRC (MONUSCO)," in *China's African Peacekeeping Decision Making in Hu Jintao's Era*, (New Delhi: Vij Books, 2015): 130.

<sup>10</sup> US Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Sudan and South Sudan*, U.S. Energy Information Administration, March 15, 2018. 5

<sup>11</sup> Ibid, 9.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid, 1.

<sup>13</sup> Claude Kabemba, "China-Democratic Republic of Congo Relations: From a Beneficial to a Developmental Cooperation," *African Studies Quarterly* 16, no. 3-4 (2016): 77

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- <sup>14</sup> Ibid, 77.
- <sup>15</sup> Ibid, 76.
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- <sup>17</sup> International Crisis Group, *Katanga: Tensions in DRC's Mineral Heartland*, Africa Report no. 239, Brussels: International Crisis Group, 2016. i-ii.
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- <sup>22</sup> Meicen Sun, (2017) 347.
- <sup>23</sup> China Africa Research Initiative, *China-Africa Annual Trade Data (Country by Country), 1992-2016*, Johns Hopkins University's School of Advanced International Studies, December 2017. <http://www.sais-cari.org/data-china-africa-trade>
- <sup>24</sup> Ibid.
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- <sup>27</sup> Ibid, 94.
- <sup>28</sup> Ibid, 94-95.
- <sup>29</sup> Wang Wei, "Review of China-Sudan Oil Cooperation," *China Oil & Gas*, no. 4 (2016), 57.
- <sup>30</sup> Ibid. 57.
- <sup>31</sup> US Energy Information Administration, *Country Analysis Brief: Sudan and South Sudan*, U.S. Energy Information Administration, March 15, 2018, 9
- <sup>32</sup> Ibid, 9.
- <sup>33</sup> William J. Norris, "China's Search for Energy Security," in *Chinese Economic Statecraft: Commercial Actors, Grand Strategy, and State Control* 69-89 (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2018), 76-77.
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- <sup>45</sup> Ibid, 10
- <sup>46</sup> Ibid, 10
- <sup>47</sup> Wang Wei, "Review of China-Sudan Oil Cooperation," *China Oil & Gas*, no. 4 (2016). 58.
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<sup>52</sup> Ibid, 108.

<sup>53</sup> Abdelmoniem Abu Edries Ali, “Five Kidnapped Chinese Oil Workers Killed in Sudan,” The Sydney Morning Herald, October 28, 2008. <https://www.smh.com.au/world/five-kidnapped-chinese-oil-workers-killed-in-sudan-20081028-59w1.html>

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<sup>55</sup> Nicholas Bariyo, “China Deploys Troops to South Sudan to Defend Oil Fields, Workers,” *Wall Street Journal*, September 9, 2014.

<sup>56</sup> UN Security Council Resolution 2155 (2014), 3.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid, 3.

<sup>58</sup> International Crisis Group. *China’s Foreign Policy Experiment in South Sudan*, Crisis Group Asia Report no. 288, July 2017, 20.

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## Conclusion

Over the past thirty years, China has gone from a minor peacekeeping contributor to a leading supporter. During this time, China has continued to contribute to UN peacekeeping operations in support of its own economic interests. These contributions both allow China to support its economic interests abroad by contributing to the peace and lasting security of the environments in which they have deployed troops, and to support China's "Peaceful Rise" narrative. In line with China's larger grand strategy concerns, China's commitment to securing its economic interests abroad constitutes a major motivating factor in China's peacekeeping contribution decision-making.

China's economic protectionist approach to UN peacekeeping contributions is particularly relevant to China's intense concern for economic stability and strength as a part of its grand strategy. Both for the stability and legitimacy of the Chinese Communist Party, and the continuation of China's growing power through economic statecraft, China's concern for its economic assets abroad is strong. The Chinese Communist Party has wedded its legitimacy to economic success. Similarly, China's ability to leverage its economic power in the form of economic statecraft also depends upon China's economic success. In order to continue that success, China must find ways to grow and feed its economy.

In recent years, China's economy has increasingly sought greater resources to continue production, and keep up with domestic consumption. Particularly in sub-Saharan Africa, it has sought out these resources by granting development loans, increasing FDI, winning large construction contracts, and increasing trade. In connection with a number of Chinese development initiatives including FOCAC and the Belt and Road Initiative, China's economic

ties with Africa have been bolstering China's "peaceful development" narrative while also strengthening its own access to strategic resources such as copper, cobalt, oil, and iron.

In much the same way that China's development and trade has been targeted towards furthering China's access to key resources and raw materials, China's contributions to UN peacekeeping operations are similarly targeted in nature. China's peacekeeping contribution increases have occurred at certain times, and been localized to ten or so missions. Whether it be early on, or more recently, China's shifting approach to UN peacekeeping operations increasingly in favor of larger troop contributions is consistently uneven. This uneven distribution signals that China's troop contributions are strategically targeted.

With economic success and resources a driving concern of Chinese grand strategy, China's troop contributions have been targeted towards protecting Chinese resource extraction operations. Paralleling Chinese FDI, construction contracts, and trade, China's shifting troop contributions are localized to states where China has greater economic interests, focusing on protecting Chinese access to strategic resources. Where China has greater economic interests, it elects to send more peacekeepers, as well as in some cases, infantry troops. These trends represent a strategically targeted approach to UN peacekeeping operations in line with China's larger economic grand strategy interests.

Given the importance of China's economic success to Chinese grand strategy, it will likely continue to engage with the UN and UN peacekeeping operations in a similar manner. Where it has greater economic interests, it will like send larger peacekeeping contingents, or send military infantry deployments. In particular, where China has raw material and resource interests, it will likely send more troops, and troops in infantry roles to support security in economically strategic areas impacted by conflict. As China's need for resources increases, China's troop contributions

will likely also increase alongside. This is, of course, dependent upon when and where the UN Security Council votes to send a peacekeeping mission, meaning that the conflict will have to be resolved, and a UN mission deployed before China will become involved through troop contributions. Though China's peacekeeping contributions have been a major component of China's attempts to promote peace and security in support of its economic interests, the reliance on the UN may prove to be too limiting in the future if a conflict arises in a strategic economic location the UN does not send a mission to.

Monitoring China's interactions with international conflicts with strong Chinese economic interests will prove important to understanding the relationship to international peace and security that China will pursue in the future. For instance, China's continued oil needs will make its interactions with the unfolding conflict in Venezuela critically important. It is already clear that China's main concern in Venezuela is oil. Concerned with the future of its oil projects in Venezuela, and the 20 billion USD Caracas owes to Beijing, Chinese diplomats met with the opposition government under Juan Guaido, despite its vocal support for the current President, Nicolás Maduro.<sup>1</sup> If the situation in Venezuela devolves further into armed conflict, it will be interesting to see how the Chinese interact with Venezuelan security given their oil interests. Furthermore, if the conflict is resolved and results in a UN peacekeeping mission, monitoring China's troop contributions and types of troop contributions will prove an important test for the findings of this study in places other than African states.

Additional research regarding China's other interactions with peace and security, be they the role China's economic interests play will be key to understanding the larger picture of China's future as a great power. Given the importance of China's economic interests abroad, the security of these assets is not limited to UN peacekeeping contributions. The UN deploys missions to

only a handful of conflict-affected states, meaning China's peacekeeping contributions are only one element of the way in which China has begun to contribute to international peace and security. China has also become a large weapons supplier, especially across Africa, and has increasingly taken a more active role in conflict mediation.<sup>2</sup> Understanding the potential connection between Chinese economic interests and these interactions will be an important aspect of understanding China's relationship to global peace and security in the future.

The importance of this study is twofold. It brings to light the correlation between Chinese peacekeeping contributions and its economic interests, and underscores the importance of this within China's larger grand strategy. This allows for a better understanding of both China's modes of global economic engagement, and for a better understanding of the centrality of China's economic interests to its peace and security policies. Highlighting the centrality of both China's economic interests and peacekeeping contributions to its "peaceful development" strategy, this study offers insight into the ways in which China's peacekeeping contributions are strategically motivated and fit within China's grand strategy objectives. This allows for a more nuanced understanding of China's strategies for rising to power peacefully.

As China's economy continues to grow, and eventually overtakes the United States, understanding the nature with which China will interact with the international community will be increasingly important. Calling for China to "lead the reform of the global governance system," Xi Jinping and the Communist Party are not just dedicated to the UN's mission, they hope to actively shape it.<sup>3</sup> China has chosen to contribute to UN peacekeeping operations as one means of gaining influence within the body.<sup>4</sup> As China becomes the world's next great power, it will be increasingly necessary to understand the role China hopes to play in the international order and the role of its peacekeeping within the changing order.



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